Our Saturday Night

— J. H. MOORE

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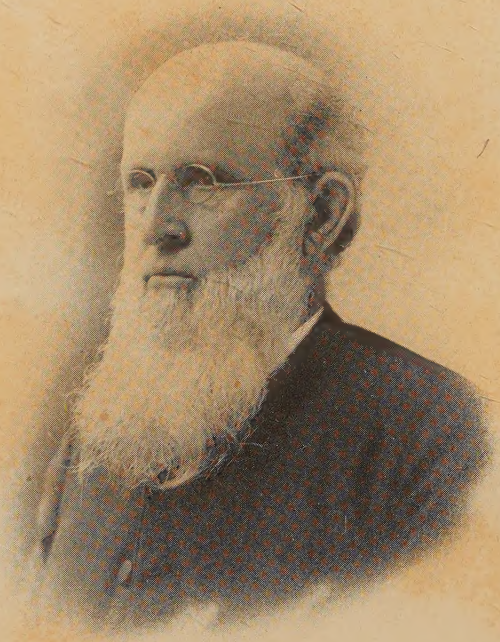

J. H. Moore.

Our Saturday Night

BY
J. H. MOORE
Office Editor
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By J. H. MOORE

Introduction.

The chapters composing this little volume were written at different times during a period of over twenty-five years of active editorial life. Most of them appeared in the publications with which the writer has been connected. Some of the chapters are given to the public for the first time, while all the others have been carefully revised, and a few of them rewritten. The collection embraces, what has been considered by some of his friends, the cream of the author's writings along moral and religious lines. Nearly every chapter contains a forcible lesson, presented by way of illustration, and each chapter may be read independent of all the rest. The different chapters were written when the author was at his best, and a number of them sprang into existence almost on the spur of the moment. In a sense, they were born,—not made. It is believed that the book will prove interesting and helpful to those who admire this class of reading, and with this hope it is sent forth on its mission.

J. H. M.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

Born in Salem, Roanoke County, Va., April 8, 1846. At four, emigrated with his parents to Woodford County, Ill., and six years later to Cedar County, Mo. Returned to Southern Illinois in 1861, and located in Northern Illinois in 1876. United with the Church of the Brethren at the age of thirteen, was called to the ministry in 1869, and ordained in 1880. Moved to Florida in 1884, and returned after seven years. Became editor of the Brethren at Work in 1876, and Office Editor of the Gospel Messenger in 1883 and in 1891. Visited the Bible Lands in 1898, and located in Elgin in 1899.

Index.

The Yellow-Back Book, ... 7
The Godly Minister, ... 10
Mush and Milk for Supper, ... 13
My Big Book, ... 17
The Grand Old Man, ... 21
The Copper Kettle, ... 25
Master of the Situation, ... 28
Seeing an Editor, ... 32
Turning from the Wrong, ... 35
Calling on Busy People, ... 39
Seeking Advice, ... 43
A Mistake in Marriage, ... 46
In the Woods of Florida, ... 50
A Man of One Talent, ... 55
On the Rented Farm, ... 58
Home, Sweet Home, ... 62
The Mistake—How Corrected? 65
Would Not Charge a Preacher, ... 69
House to House Talks, ... 72
The Good Name, ... 76
Testing Things, ... 79
Talking Religion, ... 82
Killing the Church, ... 86
Some Observations at Church, ... 89
The Friend of Birds, ... 92
The Anointing, ... 96
The Seed We Are Sowing, ... 101
Angels Weeping, ... 105
Snow-Bound, ... 108
The Good Old Time, ... 112
The Lord's Day, ... 115

The Wise Mother, ...119
Parents' Mistakes, ...123
Entering Jerusalem, ...126
The Sunbonnet in Jerusalem, ...129
Closing the Door Behind Him, ...132
The Mistake, ...135
The Thorn Removed, ...139
The Stolen Goose, ...142
Satan and Wealth, ...144
The Clock Not Started, ...147
Driven from Home, ...151
The Bible Our Neighbors Read, ...154
The Sunday Dinner, ...158
The Mother and the Daughter, ...162
The Child's Commentary, ...164
The Mind: Its Care, ...167
Giving Up the Semicolon, ...170
Clean Hands, ...172
Grandfather, ...175
Ideal Parents, ...179
The Beggar, ...182
Flowers for the Living, ...186
The Brave Mother, ...189

Our Saturday Night

The Yellow-Back Book.

It was my privilege to attend a protracted meeting, conducted by the Brethren about fifty-two years ago. It was the first meeting of the kind I ever attended, and it did not fail in good results. This meeting was held in a log carpenter shop, among the hills of Southwest Missouri, and was conducted by Eld. James R. Gish, whose wealth now goes on supplying our ministers with books from what is known as the Gish Fund.

Just how he happened to come into our neighborhood I cannot say, but his preaching produced the turning point in my life, as well as in the lives of some others. With my parents I attended each night, and though I heard everything that was said, still there was but one thing that took hold of my mind, and it clings to me to this day. It was a simple point, and I present it here for the purpose of emphasizing the importance of lessons being made so simple that even children may understand them.

Bro. Gish was discoursing on the importance of reading the Bible, in order to learn our duty direct-

ly from the Book. He said many people refuse to read the Word of God, claiming that their memory is so poor that they can not keep in mind what they actually read. He said, To test this poor memory business, just give one of these persons a little yellow-back book, and he will read it through, then go up the road to a neighbor and tell the contents of the book from start to finish. These are the kind of people, said Bro. Gish, who claim to have poor memories. They cannot remember what is in the Bible, but the contents of a little yellow book, that is of no particular value, they can remember just as well as anybody.

To my young mind this was fine logic. So, on the way home that night, walking, the distance being more than a mile, I wondered if I had any memory. I had never read any part of the Bible; in fact, I did not know one thing about Jesus, though I was in my twelfth year. The more I thought over the subject, the more anxious I became to read the Testament,—as we in those days called the New Testament,—for the purpose of testing my memory. Before reaching home I had resolved to read the little volume, if a copy of the book could be had.

The next morning I managed to get hold of a small ten-cent Testament, which I secretly placed in my pocket and read during odd moments. Never

before or since have I read a book with such intense interest. My work made it necessary for me to be in the woods from morning until night, and I did the most of my reading while seated on a log or a stump. Every spare moment found me with the little black book in my hand, only wishing that I could put in the whole day reading.

Well, the story about the little, yellow-back book had done its work with me most thoroughly. It had set me to reading, and I soon understood my duty. A few months later I submitted to the washing of regeneration. Bro. Gish went on with his preaching for nearly forty years, and never knew, until a few years before his death, that his simple story drove the truth home to at least one heart.

I now mean to urge the importance of presenting the duty we owe to God in a striking manner. If thus presented it will fall into prepared soil, and be almost certain to grow. These simple incidents take hold upon the young minds, and may cling to them for years before moving them to obedience. Let this be as it may, but one thing is certain, ministers of the Gospel should not underrate the value of those points and illustrations calculated to arrest the attention of the young and start them in the right direction. In the presentation of the truth there is nothing so effective as forcible and clear illustrations.

The Godly Minister.

It was in the month of August, 1859, one Saturday evening, that we were all in a state of expectancy. The yard had been raked, the house had been put in trim, some extra baking had been done, and a cheerful look had taken possession of the whole family. We were looking for the preacher that evening. He lived twenty-five miles to the south, and did not come very often, but when he did come, he was given a welcome accorded few ministers in these days of business and bustle.

I was then a lad thirteen years old, and our home, as stated, was in Missouri. A few days before I had told my mother that I wanted to be baptized when Uncle Billy came down the next time. That is what we all called him. His real name was Eld. Wm. Gish, and his home was some distance south of Stockton, the county seat of Cedar County. We all loved the old preacher most dearly, and never knew how to do enough for him. He always rode on horseback, and we were as familiar with the name of his horse "Bally," as with the preacher himself. In fact to call out in childish delight, "Old Bally is coming!" meant as much as to say, "Uncle Billy is coming." In those days, when preachers were few and much beloved, Bro. Gish was sure to

be greeted outside of the yard gate by the whole family, baby and all. Even the family dogs seemed to take in the situation and commence their doggish pranks. Usually old Bally was loaded up with children, taken to the well, given a good drink of the best water in the country and then assigned a comfortable place in the log barn.

That night a chapter from the Bible, a song from the little hymn book, and the prayer of the godly man prepared us for the sleep which only the happy and cheerful can enjoy. In my boyish way of looking at things I regarded Bro. Gish as the best man in the world. I often wished that I could be just as good as he was. In him I had the utmost confidence. I thought that everything he did was just right. I cannot now remember one thing he ever said, and yet I sat and listened to his preaching with the greatest of interest. I would have walked five miles any Sunday to hear him preach.

The next morning, of course, was Sunday, and we were all up bright and early, so as to get ready in good time for meeting. Our meeting day was the best of the days. We never had any thought of missing even one service. There were three of us to be baptized, myself being the youngest one. I distinctly remember that in laying the order before the applicants one of the deacons said, "We will say

nothing to John about the order in dress. We can explain that to him when he gets older." Well, decades have come and gone, but that part of the visit has never been completed.

The meeting was in a schoolhouse on a hill to the north. After meeting we went on a little further to the north, into the edge of St. Clair County, and there had prayer on the bank of one of nature's pools. The water had for centuries been plunging down over a huge rock shelf, and had scooped out a large basin, that was quite deep at the upper end. Into this pool, surrounded by trees, the applicants were led, and buried with Christ in the holy ordinance of Christian baptism. I came from the liquid grave fully resolved to live a new life in another kingdom. Since then the years have come and gone. My life became crowded with incidents, but in all of my wanderings I have never gotten entirely beyond the influence of the godly man who assisted me to mount the steps and pass into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I would that all the ambassadors of the cross could be respected and loved as was this earnest preacher, whose visits to my father's family were the most blessed occasions in my early life.

Mush and Milk for Supper.

Among the early settlers in this country there was doubtless more hospitality than there is at the present time, and it was probably more highly prized. Those given to the entertaining of strangers were generally spoken of in a complimentary manner. In the absence of hotels they were sought out by the traveler, and then recommended to the other travelers. In this way some families became widely known with the traveling public.

There were those who prided themselves with the thought that they never turned a stranger from their door. My father was one of this class. At the time of which we now write he lived on a farm a short distance from an extensively-traveled road in the Southwest. Houses were then few, and some of them far apart. Every traveler who asked for lodging got it,—such as we had in those days, when everybody in that part of the country was glad to be the proud owner of even a one-story log cabin, with a puncheon floor, clapboard roof and a large fireplace, where most of the cooking was done. In the lodging of strangers our experience was varied, sometimes interesting and now and then a little annoying. We now refer to an instance that has always been pleasant to think about.

One evening a well-dressed traveler rode up to the fence, just in front of the door—we lived about three hundred yards from the road—and asked lodging of my father. He was told that he could share the hospitality of the home if he thought he could put up with our simple way of living. This he said he could do with pleasure. He dismounted—nearly all travelers in those days made their way through the country on horseback—and his horse was placed in the log stable on the north side of the hill, while the traveler, with my father and us children, waited for supper in the sitting room, dining room and kitchen combined.

For supper that evening my mother had prepared only mush and milk, the famous evening diet for that part of the West. When she learned that we were to entertain the stranger she immediately readjusted things at one end of the table. Here she placed her best china—such as it was—and a few choice articles of diet. The stranger witnessed the readjusting with considerable interest. When all things were ready he was invited to take his place at that part of the table where the china and spreads contrasted rather sharply with the crocks and plain dishes elsewhere.

After my father had given thanks he told the stranger to "help himself." This was the usual

western style of indicating the moment to commence eating. The gentleman nodded politely, at the same time keeping an eye on the rest of us who dipped into the common dish, took out plentiful supplies of mush, and placed the same in our bowls of cool, fresh milk. After watching the movements a few seconds he leaned back in his chair, looked straight at my mother and said: "Madam, what have I done that I cannot have some of this mush and milk too?" This brought out smiles all around the table. He was assured that there was plenty of it and was immediately supplied with a bowl and spoon, and was soon eating mush and milk like the rest of us. It was a pleasure to see that hungry traveler enjoying the best relished meal that he had probably eaten for months. To him it was something unusual to sit in a rude log cabin, with a family of poor yet healthy and happy people, and share with them such simple articles of diet as they could afford.

The evening was spent most pleasantly, for he proved to be a man of fine literary attainments. Little did he think that by coming down to our level he was making on young hearts impressions that would be spoken of fifty years later. He went his way. His name has long since faded from my memory, but his kind and manly conduct will never be

forgotten. It is a pleasure to think of a stranger traveling over the country, and leaving behind him traces of kindness that will be fondly remembered long after he has gone to his grave.

A boy one time came to a minister and asked to be received into the church. Among other things he said that he wanted to be baptized. The minister questioned him very closely, for he thought the lad was quite young to be admitted to baptism. The boy, as older people look at religion, did not know much about the Scriptures, but finally said, "I think I know enough to begin with." Certainly, the minister thought, the boy knows enough to begin with. And who is it that does not know enough to begin doing right? He who knows enough to begin the new life should commence without delay, and advance in the ways of righteousness as more light is received. This is all the Lord asks of any person, and yet we may rest assured that this much is expected of us. Why should it not be? Why should a man do less than he knows? If he knows to do good he should not hesitate to go to the limit of his knowledge. The great trouble with people is, they do not follow the light they have.

My Big Book.

When I was about twelve years old a book agent came to our home and had a long talk with my father. He had with him a large, well-bound book, in which he seemed very much interested. I did not listen to the conversation, nor can I say that I felt any concern about what was going on. I liked the appearance of the book, but the thought of attempting to read so large a work never entered my mind.

At any rate, the agent went away, but left the book. He, of course, carried some of my father's money with him. Of this I thought a little strange, for my father impressed me as a man who was exceedingly careful about his expenditures. A few days later I heard him tell mother that the book agent had pulled the wool over his eyes.

For months the black book, as we called it, lay around the house, but no one seemed interested in what it contained. In the front were a few pictures that attracted my attention, but aside from these pictures I gave the book no thought whatever. A few months before I had, for the first time, read a part of the New Testament through. One day I told my father that I wished I could read something about Jerusalem. He told me there was something about Jerusalem in the book he got of that agent.

The place was found, and I read the account with intense interest.

This led me to leafing throught the book and I happened onto the part about the Revolutionary War. This was the first I knew about such a war, and I do not know that I ever traced the lines of history with such eagerness. It made me hungry for history, and I read and reread the long chapter. Looking through the book I found a splendid sketch of Washington, then another of Columbus and the discovery of America. All of this was to me like a revelation.

But I soon caught onto the fact that the contents were arranged in alphabetical order, and that I could find something on any point in history that I could think of. With this discovery I was elated. The book proved to be F. A. Durivage's "Popular Encyclopedia of History, Ancient and Modern." It was in fine print, two columns, and contained 750 large pages.

I put in every spare moment on the book. To me it was a regular mine of information. Every day brought something new to my attention. It was the only book I had to read, and, in fact, I did not feel that I needed anything else. A few years later, when it became necessary for us to leave our Missouri home, to escape the ravages of war, and only a few

things could be taken in the wagon, I managed to find a place for my big book. I walked over two hundred miles barefooted, had no shoes and only scant clothing, but I could not think of leaving my book behind.

After reaching the land of safety, and though we had to struggle hard for a living, I did not neglect my history. In fact I was about sixteen years old before I had the privilege of reading any other work. I went to my book for everything that I wanted to know along historical lines. Here I read the history of the different nations of earth, read about the leading men of every generation, and about the occurrences in general that had taken place, so that I easily became one of the best-read boys in history in the neighborhood. When it came to history I was always ready for a talk, and when occasion demanded it, I would argue with most any person that tackled me.

I have been glad, hundreds of times, that the unknown book agent pulled the wool over my father's eyes, and induced him to purchase the book, that remained my constant companion for years. The falling of this book into my hands was the most fortunate thing that could have happened to me. It came to me at a time when I could not attend school, and when I had nothing else to read. True, for a boy

it was heavy reading, but in the absence of schooling it was just what I needed for the training of the mind. It laid for me a good historical foundation, and on this foundation I continued to build all the years of my busy and active life. To me this book agent was an angel in disguise. He went his way: we never saw him again, but I certainly would like to have told him the story of at least one book that he sold to an unwilling purchaser.

The Grand Old Man.

The breaking out of the war in 1861 found me a boy with my parents on a farm, sixteen miles south of Osceola, Mo. We had witnessed the passing of large armies, had seen the contending forces on the way to meet each other in deadly conflict, had heard the distant rumbling of artillery, and fully realized that our whole State would soon be exposed to the ravages of war. Siegel had fought his battle at Carthage. Gen. Lyon had been killed at Springfield, and his proud army, which passed our farm on its way to the field of battle, had been defeated. Bands of Confederates took possession of the country, and we felt that we were no longer safe in our home-land.

The hasty loading of a few necessities in a two-horse wagon, locking the doors of a well-furnished house, leaving our cattle in the large, wooded pasture, leaving hundreds of bushels of grain in the stacks, and a night departure from the place that had to us for five years been "home, sweet home," made up a scene in my early experience never to be erased from memory. There were eight of us, father, mother, brothers and sisters. The next morning we were joined by two other families, our purpose being to make our way, if possible, north, and reach

Illinois, which we regarded as the land of safety.

It was a long, dusty trip in the hot month of August. As three of our family were sick at the time, no room could be spared for me in the wagon, so I walked practically the entire distance. We finally reached Adams County, Ill., almost destitute, and located among the Brethren near Liberty. The suffering endured on this trip and the hardships of the winter that followed need not be told, but they were the most bitter experiences of my life.

It was here that I met Eld. George Wolf, then over eighty years old. It was my good fortune to be in his presence a great deal, and I spent many an hour listening to him expound the Scriptures, or narrating some interesting incident connected with his former life. I never grew tired of his interesting narratives, for he settled in Illinois long before it became a State, and probably knew more about the hardships and experiences of the pioneer life than any man in the State.

The good old man lived in the rear end of the farmhouse occupied by his son David, who was also a well-informed minister, and a man of much influence and enterprise. The building was large, neat and commodious. At the rear stood a well-preserved log house, onto which the main building was joined, which, I presume, had been built by Eld. George

Wolf in an early day, at least it was many years his home. For his exclusive use he had one large, comfortable room provided with a good fireplace, in which he always kept a brilliant fire in cool weather, and on damp days. His wife had preceded him to the other world, so he spent much of his time alone. Many times have I stepped to the half open door to get a glimpse of the venerable old man, as he sat in his old arm-chair gazing steadily at the fire. He seemed as one waiting for the boatman to come and bear him away to the other shore. Here he sat, day after day, thinking as only aged people can think and meditate. His eyes were too dim to read much, and he was too heavy and feeble to travel with comfort.

In appearance Eld. Wolf had something about him that marked him as a man far above the ordinary. He stood over six feet in height, had broad shoulders, and weighed more than two hundred pounds. His head was very large, forehead lofty and gently retreating, eyebrows greatly arched, and beneath were large, piercing eyes, that never failed to attract attention. He was a man that would have commanded attention in any company. He was one of nature's great men, eminently qualified for the widest range of thought, and seemed to be a born leader of men. As a thinker he had few equals; as

an expounder he would command almost universal respect, and impress one with his superior, yet unassuming greatness. His very presence, and manner of address, inspired an audience with confidence. In the community where he lived, his name and good deeds will never be forgotten. His life and adventures, if carefully written, would make one of the most interesting biographies ever published.

To be with the grand old man, to listen to him talk by the hour, to hear him deliver an occasional address, and to be inspired and impressed by his marvelous personality was the most fortunate period of my life. He impressed me as the first great thinker I ever met. When I consider the hardships endured in trying to reach the North, and the losses suffered because of the war, I count all these as nothing compared with what I gained by being thrown in company, at an early age, with one of the most gifted thinkers, and the most profound reasoners that it has ever been my good fortune to meet.

I cannot get away from the thought that the hand of God was in all these experiences. I have been a busy man. I have mingled with public men the greater part of my life, but the sight of that good old man still remains with me as I saw him seated in his large arm-chair, gazing into the fire that burned in his old-fashioned fireplace.

The Copper Kettle.

When I was about seventeen years old, my parents moved onto a farm in Adams County, this State, located about fifteen miles from where the main body of the Brethren lived. In course of time, arrangements were made to have preaching at a schoolhouse in our neighborhood, every eight weeks. The appointments were usually filled by Bro. David Wolf, son of Eld. Geo. Wolf, or Bro. Wm. Lirely. Both were good preachers, and usually drew large congregations.

In the fall, when the apples began to ripen, my parents, Virginia-like, concluded that we ought to make some apple-butter, hence made inquiry for a copper kettle, but none was to be found, as the people in that part of the country knew nothing about making apple-butter. Our meeting-day came,—we all attended of course,—and Bro. David Wolf preached. After meeting, one of the neighbors told my father that there was a Pennsylvanian living among the hills, about ten miles to the south, who had a large copper kettle that might possibly be had if he would send for it.

Early on Monday morning I was started out with a team, in search of the copper kettle. The route was not only rough, but difficult to follow.

Finally I drove up to the well-improved little farm that had been pointed out as the place where the Pennsylvanian lived. Walking into the neatly-kept yard, I met a pleasant-looking gentleman, and asked if his name was ——. He replied in the affirmative. I then told him where I lived, and what I had come for, assuring him we would take good care of the kettle, and pay him for the use of it. He said that he had a large copper kettle, but would neither lend nor hire it out, as such a vessel cost a good deal, and was very easily spoiled. He stated that his had been injured a time or two, and he had concluded not to let it go any more.

Feeling the disappointment keenly, I apologized as best I could for troubling him, at the same time telling him that while at meeting the day before, one of our neighbors had told my father of the kettle, and that was the way we came to know of it. He asked me where we attended meeting. I told him at the Bush schoolhouse, three miles east of Payson. "Who preached?" says he. I answered, "David Wolf." "To what church does he belong?" he eagerly inquired. "The Dunkard church," says I. "Is your father a member of the Dunkard church?" he asked. I told him he was. "All right," says he, "he can have the kettle, and is perfectly welcome to it. I used to know these fine people back in

Pennsylvania, where I came from, and they were always honest, and would take good care of things." I was soon on my way home with the large copper kettle in the wagon, feeling wonderfully elated over the result of my trip.

On reaching home I told the whole story to my parents, and they felt not only a little proud of the good name the church had, but showed a decided appreciation for the way I had approached the Pennsylvanian and obtained the use of his kettle. The reader may rest assured that my parents did their best to preserve the good name of the Brethren church, and the kettle was returned in fine condition, with a sample of the kind of apple-butter we knew how to make.

It is encouraging to note what a good impression honesty and uprightness had made on the mind of the man, who had moved from Pennsylvania twenty years before. He had not forgotten the Brethren and their honesty. That is the kind of a religion that takes with thinking people. The borrowing of a copper kettle was a small affair, yet it brought to light the effects of honest living upon the part of others. That man had confidence in the very name "Dunkard." He thought that every one who belonged to the church was all right, and could be trusted. We trust he never had occasion to change his opinion.

Master of the Situation.

In early life I met a successful farmer, who said he made it a rule to push his work, but never permitted his work to push him. In other words, he controlled his work instead of his work controlling him. He planned and then executed, laying out for each day that which he proposed to accomplish. The man always had plenty to do, and yet he was never rushed to death, as we say of some men. There were times when he rushed his work, but he remained every day and every hour master of the situation.

He succeeded, for men of this kind always succeed. He had learned to think, to plan, and to systematize. He had a system that was his own, and suited the work in which he was engaged. Before he rose in the morning he knew just what he had planned to do, should the weather prove favorable. If the weather did not permit him to carry out his plans, he had something else in mind that needed attention. People in the neighborhood used to wonder how this man happened to get along with his work so well. It never occurred to most of them that he planned carefully and then worked up to his plans.

Other people besides the farmers need to plan.

The woman in the house should plan. Before retiring she may know what is to be done the next day. True, she may have so much to do that she hardly knows where to begin, but she does not need to do everything in one day. That needing first attention should be done first, and the other things will fall in place, provided there is good planning and the woman becomes master of the situation instead of the situation mastering her. People who plan and push their work usually have time to rest and gather strength for further duties, but those who permit their work to crowd them, so they can never think long enough to plan, are certain to be constantly overworked.

The Christian should plan to do this, that, and the other good thing, and then plan to refuse to do some other things not in keeping with his profession. He should plan for Sunday services, as well as for the midweek prayer meeting. He should plan for the Sunday school as surely as he should look ahead and be ready to attend the members' meeting when the day comes. He should not wait until the morning of the love feast to make up his mind whether he is to attend, and what time he proposes to start. All of this should be settled days before, and everything arranged for the occasion. In fact,

he should make it a business to get everything ready for the feast.

The preacher must plan. He knows when he is expected to deliver his message, and he should not only get his subject matter ready for his discourse, but he must get himself ready. He wants to be in a condition to do his best for the God he serves, and for the people he is to instruct. When the hour comes for his service, let him be on hand with his hymns and his message. He does not want to appear before his congregation with an apology. God does not send men to make apologies, but to preach the Gospel.

Everybody should cultivate the habit of planning. The student in school can accomplish more by planning well, and then working his plans. It may be well to set the time to retire and the time to rise. Whether in school or out of school, we should plan for the amount and kind of reading to be done. Men and women in every walk of life should plan. It will make them more systematic, as well as more efficient, and pave the way to success.

One should plan for his manner of life, morally, mentally and physically. There are things in which no man or woman should ever indulge. People should lay plans for meeting and overcoming temptations, should they ever come their way. Men

should lay their life plans for avoiding intoxicants and the gamblers' table. All parties will do well thoroughly to set themselves against card playing and theater going. There are scores of other things in life that should be shunned by men and women who wish to avoid making wrecks of themselves, but they are never certain of the victory without some well-laid plans that they purpose to live by, and work up to, and with such plans any man or woman may become complete master of the situation.

Seeing an Editor.

When a boy, twelve years old, and living in Southwestern Missouri, I had the privilege of seeing my first editor. The country was then new, conveniences few and the neighbors all poor, but very kind. A log schoolhouse, out in the woods, about two miles away, and presided over by one who had some knowledge of the famous three Rs, was the seat of learning for the rising generation occupying a territory nearly if not quite five miles square. To attend this institution of learning three months out of twelve was regarded as a rare privilege in those pioneer days.

We had but few meetings; Sunday Schools were unknown and a newspaper, now and then, was most highly prized. Its contents were read from end to end, and commented on for weeks. But there finally came into the neighborhood a man, who was well dressed, and rode a pony that could outwalk anything on the road. The man was from Arkansas, so it was reported, and was actually the editor of a paper. I had traveled some, going first from Virginia to Illinois, then to Missouri, and thought I had seen a few things, but never before in my life had I seen a living, moving editor. I eyed him from head to foot, studied his ways, noticed how he walked,

talked and rode. I studied his face, looked into his keen, dark eyes, took special note of his black hair, and finally settled down to the conclusion that he must be a very "smart" man because he had a high forehead. Never before or since have I studied a man as I studied that editor.

I believed him to be a man of rare information, and in my boyish way of looking at him, I thought he must have all knowledge at his command. And then the idea that I had seen an editor, and that he had actually been at our house and talked with my father and mother! To see and experience such a thing was to me the opportunity of a lifetime. And then to think that the tall man, who wore good clothes and rode that nice pony, was "smart" enough to edit a paper! I wondered how much he had to know to write what we in those days saw in print. I thought he had to know the meaning of all the words, know how to spell every one of them, and know just where each one should fit in to make good sense. I thought that he not only had to write everything in his paper, but that he had to set the type too, and print the paper besides. Surely he must be a great man. So I thought and so I reasoned.

How commonplace are such observations and thoughts in this enlightened part of the country!

But not so then. From the contemplation of that editor I got more real enjoyable thinking than I could get today from the reading of the best book printed. And now, after years of reading and writing and experiences in some of the different walks of life, I almost envy the boy who can yet spend weeks studying the new and simple things that for the first time engage his attention. Nor have I a word of censure or reproof for the boy or girl who becomes intensely interested in the things that may seem foolish to the well-informed. I know that they are getting an amazing amount of good out of their simple discoveries and observations, and however simple may be the questions that they ask me I feel disposed to give them the most civil answer at my command. I have no snubs for the child that asks simple and even foolish questions. I have not forgotten the many happy hours I whiled away, when a boy, contemplating some of the ordinary things of life.

Turning from the Wrong.

In the early part of my ministry it fell to my lot to do considerable preaching in a locality where the Brethren were very little known. In time several applied for membership, and were baptized. Among them were a man and wife of good standing in the community. They not only united with the church, but they left the world. Everybody could see that they were converted. They did not have to tell people that they were Christians. Their lives told the story, and told it well. To preach to the people in that neighborhood was simply a delight. It was like cultivating corn in a productive soil. One could see the seed of the kingdom grow.

Possibly a year later the brother came to me and said that he and his wife had been at a very worldly Fourth of July celebration. In that part of the country the people did not come together to worship God on the Fourth, but merely for amusement, and the amusement in which they engaged was by no means of the innocent class. Well, the brother told the whole story, how he and his wife happened to get there, and how they happened to find themselves looking at the dancing on the dancing floor. Finally the wife said, "I believe this is no place for Christians. Let us go home." The brother

thought the same way, though the wife spoke first.

But they went home, and after thinking the matter all over, the brother decided to ask me what I thought about it, whether I thought they had done wrong. I told him that in my judgment they had done just right,—not by attending the place of amusement, but by going home. I then added, that if they would always do that way when they got into places where Christians had no business they would greatly please the Lord. I did not tell them to come to the church and make a public confession, but I did tell some of the other members what advice I had given.

That lesson has been useful to me in more ways than one. The importance of turning my back on places unbecoming Christians was forcibly impressed upon my mind. And really, that is the very essence of vital piety. When one gets into a place where saints have no business, what better thing can he do than to get out of it of his own free will? And then, when one of his own free will does correct a wrong, why not let the matter rest?

I know that some people think that all matters of this kind should be made right before the church. Of course some of them may be of such a public and aggravated character that they should be thus disposed of, but it will be wise to make a reasonable

discrimination. I have sometimes urged members to come before the church of their own accord and tell the members just what they had done. But when it was evident that they had done the right thing in correcting their own mistakes I did not care to force a public confession from them.

I want to impress on the mind of each reader that a public, forced confession for a little mistake is not always the best thing to demand. This, of course, does not apply to aggravated cases. But when we see that a weak member is doing all he can to amend his ways, or to correct his unintentional mistakes, why not encourage him? That would be Christianlike. In fact that is the course that love would dictate.

In exacting public confessions for mistakes of the character mentioned—if they can be called mistakes —we may go just far enough to discourage some of those who are weak. If they are strong enough to turn away from sin, and then seek the ways of right, the turning ought to be regarded as a sufficient confession. True, with the tongue confession should be made, but ofttimes the turning of the whole body and life from an unintentional wrong speaks much louder than it is possible for words to speak. I would not give one voluntary turning away from error for all the forced confessions ever made. In

fact I can hardly make myself believe that any good can result from a forced confession, but I do know that there is virtue in a voluntary departure from sin.

Little sins become great sins because of the great evil they make possible. To think about an evil deed may by some be reckoned as harmless, and yet, if it were not for the evil thinking, the evil deed would never take place. The man at the crossroads may sometimes think about taking the life of his neighbor on the next corner, but thinking, we say, amounts to nothing if it goes no farther. But it goes farther and the whole neighborhood is thrown into a state of excitement because one man, in the prime of life, has to be buried and another has to be hung. All of this comes from a little evil thinking. But the evil thinking is not little. It is great. It has become a tremendous sin on account of the terrible crime committed. And so it may be said of other sins. They may seem small, and yet great issues hang on them. The minute hand of a watch is a small affair, and yet, because it fell back a few minutes, many a train has been wrecked, and hundreds of lives have been lost.

Calling on Busy People.

While engaged in editorial work in Mount Morris, Ill., a student one time came into my office and said: "Have you time to talk a little?" "Yes," I replied, "I have time to talk, but no time to wait." He understood the meaning, took a seat, and said what he had to say. He did not stop to think about something else, in order to prolong the conversation. He had his points well in mind, and was not slow about presenting them. No time was lost in this interview, and when we were through with the subject in hand, he went on about his business, and I resumed my work at the desk, feeling all the while like seeking an opportunity to commend the young man for his good sense. I was full of business that day, had little time to spare, but was really helped by the short call.

At the College was another young man who frequently called on me. When he entered the room he walked straight up to my desk, hat in hand, and told his story at once. Sometimes we talked two minutes, at others five and, probably a time or two, he took ten minutes of my time. But when he was through he knew it, and took his departure as quickly as he came. I never felt that time was wasted by talking to that class of people.

Then, on the other hand, I have had persons come to my desk, who did not seem to know what they wanted. They wanted to talk, but had nothing special in their mind to talk about. Their main purpose seemed to be to while away an hour or two.

Well, while it is our duty to be courteous to people of this class, still, how much better it would be if they could cultivate different habits and learn the value of brevity when calling on busy people. It takes some people a long while to learn this lesson, but it is a lesson that every young man and young woman should master.

But we have never been greatly annoyed in this way, and have little reason for complaining, still we happen to know of instances when busy people were greatly annoyed by these careless callers. We have known them to call on professors of literary institutions, and detain them from their work for hours. It would have been a great deal better to make a short call, talk over the matter in hand, and then withdraw.

We call attention to an annoyance that deserves more than a passing notice. It may be Sunday morning. The minister is getting ready to preach. He is preparing his subject as well as himself. He has a message for his congregation, and is getting

matters in shape to do his best in the Lord's work. Some one calls. It is not quite meeting time, and he wants to have a little talk with the minister. It may be about some trouble. The talk lengthens out; the hour for church comes, and the preacher must go before his congregation unprepared to deliver his message. He enters the pulpit, feeling that he cannot do justice to the Master's cause. However, he must make the attempt. The time must be occupied, and though he may not reach the hearts of the people, still custom demands that he go on to the end of the service. He returns home after preaching, feeling deep down in his troubled heart that his well-meant efforts have proved a failure, all because some one did not think.

A busy wife and mother goes from room to room in the performance of her household duties. Breakfast is over, the children have been started off to school, and she is doing her utmost to straighten up things, and have dinner ready when the children come home from school and when the husband comes from the shop or field. She has planned well. She can complete her many tasks and still secure a little rest on the lounge or in the comfortable rocking-chair.

But at eleven here comes Mrs. B. She lives just across the street, has few cares and means to call

just a minute. Thirty minutes are consumed, and this throws the good housewife all out of tune for preparing and enjoying the dinner with her family. The husband sees that something is wrong and so do the children. The dinner is eaten, but not enjoyed. Everything is late, the children must run to reach the schoolroom before the last bell rings and the husband too has to make great haste so he will not be late at his work.

The mother and wife is left alone again, tired, sad and discouraged. All the afternoon the work drags, and she begins to wish that her life might have been different. When, late in the night, she goes to her room she feels in her troubled heart that the day has been no blessing to her, and she wonders how long life will thus continue. If people would only think! But some of them do not, and what cannot be cured may have to be endured.

Seeking Advice.

When I located in the orange belt of Florida, in the eighties, I felt the need of some reliable information about orange culture. It was important that I should know what kind of trees to plant, when and how to plant them, and how to cultivate my grove. There were plenty of men to give free advice, and as a rule each one had some ideas wholly different from all the rest. I noticed that those who could do the most talking, and seemed to know more than anybody else, were only recently from the North.

All through life it had been my rule, when seeking information, to go to those who had made a success of the business about which I wished to make inquiry. While I appreciated the kindness of the recent comers from the North, in their desire to inform me concerning the best way to raise an orange grove, I did not prize their knowledge very highly. So I drove out in the woods, seven miles, and interviewed a kind old gentleman who had lived in that part of the State for thirty years, and was then making money out of his fine orange grove. I saw that he was making a success of his business, and thought he would be the man from whom to secure information that could be relied upon. I

whiled away many a pleasant and profitable hour from year to year in his grove and society.

This leads me to say that there is nothing like experience when it comes to giving information and advice that is of value. In my younger days, before I had any family of my own, I used to preach on how to raise a family. I had some fine theories, and had my earnest way of presenting them. I felt confident that my theories were correct, and thought it my duty to enlighten others, but I had no experience to relate. Well, years have gone by. I have raised a family of my own, and now I have considerable experience but no more theories. I do not do as much preaching along that line as I did when I knew less about it. I think that I have learned that two decades of experience in raising a family is worth a half dozen volumes of theories. Had your young minister gone to some father who had made a success of raising a family, for information, before delivering his sermons on the subject, he might have said something that would have been of special value to his hearers.

But how common it is for ministers, who have no children of their own, to tell other people how to raise their children! Some who have never raised even one child can preach by the hour on family government and kindred subjects. They have

theories almost without number, and had they time they would like to write a book on a subject about which they know practically nothing.

Before Harriet Beecher Stowe became the mother of any children she wrote a most charming book on child training. The work had a large sale, and was widely read in all parts of the country. It gave the author quite a reputation as a writer along that particular line. One time Mrs. Stowe met a lady who had considerable difficulty in keeping her child quiet while waiting in the depot for her train. Mrs. Stowe was kind enough to tell the lady that if she would read her book on child culture it would prove very helpful to her in keeping her child quiet under such circumstances, and received this surprising answer from the tired mother: "Whenever you have some children of your own, then you may know how to write a book."

I do not mean to say that preachers who have no children of their own, and have never had any experience in raising a family, should not preach on the subject of raising a Christian family, but they should bear in mind that a few words from men of experience along such lines are worth an hour spent in parading empty theories. Whenever I listen to a long sermon or essay on child training, or how to raise a family, by one who has never had any experience whatever, I cannot help thinking about the answer given to Mrs. Stowe in the depot.

A Mistake in Marriage.

I once knew a family of very devout people, especially noted for their education, culture and standing in society. They had an only daughter, who, because of her brilliant mind and rare accomplishments, was the idol of her parents and the pride of the community. Everything in the power of the parents was done to give the daughter a finished education and fit her for rare usefulness in the world. Nor was her religious and moral training neglected in the least, especially on the part of the mother, who was a model in religious circles.

The young woman moved in the best of society. Among the young men of the community, and some of them were of the highest type, she could have taken her choice. But, strange to say, her heart was in some manner won by a young man far below her in education, refinement and society. Her father pleaded and her mother wept, but all to no avail. Even her friends remonstrated, yet the young woman refused to listen to any one save the young man who had asked her hand in marriage.

The day came for the wedding. Hands were joined, a few words were said, a prayer was offered and the two hearts were one in the face of prayers and pleadings of loving parents and true friends.

When the mother saw all was over, then, in deep anguish, after years of hard work and great anxiety in bringing up her daughter, and after spending hundreds of dollars in educating her, she was heard to say: "Surely, considering all the worry and toil, it does not pay to raise girls."

Few mothers have ever felt disappointment more keenly. She almost felt that her love had been outraged, and the more she pondered over the situation, the more did she feel in her own heart that her daughter had made a mistake. But she had done what she could to prevent the mistake, and so her conscience was clear.

The father and mother talked the situation over. They could not get away from the thought that their child had made a mistake and some day she would see it, but they were sensible people and decided that she was their daughter still, and that their home should be her home whenever she chose to spend a day or even an hour under their roof. They were too sensible to remind the young wife of her mistake after it was too late. They were too noble of heart to close the door on a daughter because she had, in this instance, gone contrary to their wishes.

They reasoned that her mistake would make life sad enough, and that they would not make the situation still more unpleasant for her by heaping upon

her the indignation that they felt in their hearts. They continued to treat her kindly, and did all they knew to make life's path as pleasant as possible.

Years have passed over the heads of those people, but during all this time the daughter has never been humiliated by the thought that her pious, intelligent and well-meaning parents look down on her. Surely she might have done better, and possibly has at times thought so, but her parents are not disturbing her by reminding her of the warning they gave. With them the past is buried and they are helping to make the future bright.

But how many parents have made it unpleasant for a son or a daughter for marrying against their wishes? Some have become so enraged that they have actually locked the home door against their own children. It is sad enough for a daughter to make a mistake in marriage, let alone to be constantly reminded of it by the ill treatment of her father and mother.

It is wise in parents to encourage their children to keep only the best of company, so they may have the best from which to select a companion. They are not to be censured for becoming deeply concerned about the selection made; and, while it may be considered unwise for parents to choose companions for their sons and daughters, still they are acting with-

in the bounds of their privileges when they do their utmost to prevent them from making mistakes. Yet when the choice is once made, and the ceremony is over, there being no opportunity to correct the mistake if one has been made, it shows a great lack of wisdom in parents for them to be constantly reminding the daughter and her husband of their disapproval. After the two have become one, let the past be buried.

In the Woods of Florida.

It was on a Saturday in the early winter of 1887. I was then living in Putnam County, Florida, on the south bank of a charming lake, known as Lake Keuka. I was at work in my orange grove when approached by a stranger. I perceived by his rapid walk, and business-like way of approaching me that he was not only a Northern man, but that he was in haste.

After being assured of my name, he wished to know if I was a "Dunkard" minister. I told him I was. He then stated his mission, saying that he was from Bears Mills, north of Gainesville, that a lady, a member of our church, had died, and the friends wished me to come to the place and conduct the funeral services.

I had visited Gainesville a few times, about thirty miles to the west, had frequently heard of Bears Mills, but had never been in that immediate vicinity, or met any of the men connected with the mills. To reach Gainesville by train that evening, it would be necessary for me to get ready and go with the gentleman at once. In due time I was at the Keuka depot, one-half mile from my home, and together we started on the late afternoon train,—the last train for that week.

Gainesville was reached about sundown. Supper was eaten at the hotel and the stranger was ready with his buggy for a drive of eight or ten miles through the lone woods of Florida. The route lay through tall timber the entire distance, and, after leaving the vicinity of Gainesville, not a house or light was to be seen. The night was dark, and the dense timber, on either side of the narrow road, made the situation anything but pleasant to contemplate.

Here I was, with a stranger in a great timber belt, and not a settler, black or white, in hearing distance. Often I could not see the road or the horse, and at times not even the driver. By looking up I got an occasional glimpse of the stars and could, now and then, see the light of the sky through the branches of the great pines. For miles everything was still. Not a sound could be heard aside from that produced by our conveyance, and the rustling of the wind among the leaves. Not a human being was met. In a sense it reminded one of passing through the valley and shadow of death. I made the trip by faith and not by sight. I trusted everything to my driver and his faithful animal.

Finally we reached an opening and I saw a dozen lights at the different mill shanties that had been erected around the mills for the workmen. I was

received at a large building, all recently constructed of new pine lumber, was ushered into a large open hall, after Southern style, then into a large, well-lighted and well-furnished living room, where I was most kindly greeted by several men and women, who seemed to regard me as a most welcome visitor from a distant and friendly land. I never before or since met a group of strangers where our natures seemed to blend so quickly.

We were soon engaged in conversation. Those in the house gathered close around me, and it seemed almost like close friendship from the start. The people told me that they were from the neighborhood of Nappanee, Ind., that they knew the Brethren well, had come into the great timber belt of Florida to engage in the milling business, and that in their number was a widow, with two boys, and that the woman had taken sick and died. They had heard of me while in the North, knew of my locating at Keuka, and had sent for me to come and help bury their neighbor, for she was a member of the Brethren church, they said, and a good woman.

The mills were about one mile from a settlement of well-to-do Southern people. In their community the services were held. Nearly all the mill people attended the funeral, and the Southern people came for miles. The audience was a large one, made up

of a good class of people from the North and South. The incidents leading up to the funeral had deeply impressed me, and prepared me for the occasion. The situation was unique and that put me at my best. I made use of the opportunity, told the story of the woman and her sad death, far away from her Northern kindred and her church. I told the story of her church, her religion, her hope of the great future, and then dwelt on the certainty, the importance and the nature of the future life. In all my experience in the ministry I never had closer attention. To most of the people, and especially the southern people, the story was out of the usual, and then, being delivered in the very shadow of death, made the services only the more impressive.

We laid the good woman to rest, in a lonely grave, in the genial clime, beneath the Southern sun, in a land of almost perpetual summer, where snows seldom come and where the long summer is given. I felt sorry for the children that were left without a mother. I could do no more than pray for them and commit them to the care of the great Father.

I came away from the place, and never had an opportunity of returning. I have thought of the incident, as it relates to a part of my experience, a hundred times. I have thought of the lonely grave beneath the Southern sky, the orphan children and

the people I met. In my funeral address I aimed to sow much gospel seed, as well as to comfort the people. I have often wondered about the seed that was sown on that occasion. Did any of it fall into good ground and grow, or did all of it fall by the wayside? I am wondering, What will the harvest be, or will there be any harvest from that sowing?

A Man of One Talent.

Early in my ministerial experience I knew a young man whom I could not fully understand. Before reaching the age of twenty he made the good confession and was received into the church. He seldom missed the church services, and was always a good listener. I never knew him to miss a members' meeting when it was possible for him to be present. I do not recall a word he ever said, in any gathering he attended, nor can I remember that he ever did anything to help along the work of the church. He behaved himself on week days and Sundays, but that is all there could be said of him. He was simply good, but not active. Finally I set him down in my own mind as a man of one talent, and could not, therefore, expect much of him. Then I wondered if he would ever be of any value to the church. I could not bring myself to think that he had wrapped his talent in a napkin and buried it, for he did not act like one who meant to hide his talent. Well, I could not understand just what he was good for, unless it was to come to church and listen to the preaching and singing, and, to some extent, help with the singing himself.

The duties of life called me to another field. I was absent a number of years. But on a beautiful

summer day I chanced to enter the old church where I had often seen the young man in my congregation, but, candidly, I had forgotten all about him. When I entered the church I was taken by surprise. A marvelous change had come over the interior of the building. Years before it was simply a plain, serviceable, barn-like house, without any attractions. On this occasion I found the walls had been dressed up with plain but neat colors, which soften the light. Shades had been placed over the windows, the seats neatly grained, the aisles carpeted, a neat pulpit constructed and a good, hot air furnace had been installed. The audience room was in a very inviting condition. It had been well aired out early in the morning, the carpets and floor were clean, and not a particle of dust could be seen on either the seats or the pulpit. Everything was scrupulously clean and in perfect order. All this was arranged before the Sunday-school hour. The janitor had done his work so completely that he had no occasion whatever for disturbing the audience during the Sunday-school and preaching service.

To my happy surprise I observed that my supposed one-talented man was the janitor, and I was told that he was regarded as the best janitor the large congregation ever had. When selected for the place he cheerfully accepted the work, and then

proceeded to make of himself an ideal janitor. He seemed to set his whole mind on his work, and not only rendered the best of satisfaction, but really made the old-fashioned church the most delightful place for services in all the region round about. In my own mind I had never been able to find any department in church work suited to the capacity of the man, but the good Master found a place for him, and in this position he was permitted to make a splendid use of his one talent. "Surely," I said to myself, "here is a man who did not dig a hole in the earth and bury his talent simply because he had but the one."

It occurred to me at the time, and I am still impressed with the same thought, that if we could have that kind of a janitor for all of our churches, we would, in many instances, have a far better attendance at most of our services. These are days when people, who live in neat homes, do not care to attend church in poorly-ventilated, badly-heated and dusty audience rooms. They expect to find heaven a clean, inviting place, and since they are taught to look upon the sanctuary of the Lord as a heavenly place in Christ Jesus, it is no more than natural that they should expect the house of God to be made physically as well as spiritually attractive. We may yet find it wise to make more use of our one-talented men.

On the Rented Farm.

I once knew an old farmer who for several years lived on a rented farm. He had a large family, mostly girls. All were quite industrious, and in moral tone they were the cream of the neighborhood. The father was intelligent and the children bright. They stood second to none of the children in the country school which they attended. The mother's education had been neglected, but she had good sense, a high idea of life and possessed a noble heart.

The house in which these people lived was quite modest, but it was kept scrupulously clean, and everything around somehow seemed to be always in order. The father came to the neighborhood an entire stranger, and by his knack for ordinary business succeeded in renting the best little farm in the community. The improvements were scant, but the soil was the best. As soon as he got on the farm everything seemed to take on a new and improved appearance. The loose fence boards were nailed up, the gates put in order, the yard fence reconstructed, the loose boards on the house and barn received attention, and a little touch was given to the fence here and there all around the farm. The scattered boards, rails, posts, etc., soon found their

way into neat piles. The whole place put on an air of cheerfulness.

As soon as the spring opened, the farmer was in his fields with plow, harrow and planter. He lost not a day, and was the first man in the neighborhood to get his seed in the ground. No farmer in that part of the country cultivated his crops better, nor did any one get better results. This greatly pleased the landlord, and he early arranged for the farmer to remain on his place as long as he wanted to rent.

The family was poor. The neighbors did not know how poor they were. For the first year they found it difficult to procure the food, clothing and other supplies actually needed. But they did not complain. All the members of the family carried a cheerful face, and seemed at their best when in the presence of others. The family had seen better days. A few years before they were in excellent circumstances, but a security debt swept away every particle of their fine estate. It was a sad hour, and cast over their lives a shadow that saddened the hearts of the father and mother many a year. With bleeding hearts and scant supplies they left their once charming home, never to return. They sought to bury their sorrow and retrieve their losses in a new and strange land. This is why we

find them on the dilapidated, rented farm. The family kept their troubles to themselves, and at the same time put forth every effort to regain in a measure what had been torn from them.

For several years the man remained on the same rented farm, and soon became known as the most industrious, wide-awake and best farmer in the community. Each year he saved money, and put it in the bank, or out on interest. In time he had enough to buy a farm of his own and pay cash for it. A few years later he had one of the best improved farms in the country, and had a reputation for honesty, industry and high moral worth second to no man in the county.

He had made life a success, and knew it, but did not boast. By attending strictly to his own business, and attending to it well, he had succeeded, not only in gaining wealth, but in making a reputation that was worth more, in the sight of both God and man, than money. He had raised a family that was an honor to the neighborhood.

During all this time he and his wife remained faithful members of the Brethren church, though not for years did a member live near them. And when the Brethren, in course of time, commenced preaching in that locality, and succeeded in building up a congregation, the farmer and his wife were

always looked up to as the model members of the church. In all their experience, whether in poverty or in wealth, they had kept their lamp burning, and though the brother has long since gone to the better land beyond the stars, it will be many a year before his name will cease to be mentioned as that of a model man, a model farmer, a model father and a model Christian. What he did, others may do. He once lost all of his property but did not lose his religion. When his finances went to the bottom he still kept his light shining. For years he lived many miles from any of the members, yet he remained loyal to the church and her principles. He was a man of few words, and was never known to make a speech in public, still by his life he preached louder than any Brethren preacher who ever lived in his community. Religiously speaking he was a living epistle, known and read by all those who knew him. Whether in the pursuit of wealth or happiness he never found religion a hindrance.

Home, Sweet Home.

Some years ago an artist, who was traveling in the South, sent me a picture of a most dilapidated negro cabin. It was built of unhewn pine logs, and covered with pine clapboards. The battened door opened outward and swung on primitive wooden hinges. Not a window pierced the walls of this Georgia cabin, and its only noticeable feature was a large chimney, built of sticks and clay, and constructed on the outside of the building. Along the front was a porch of the most primitive style, with puncheon floor, and the whole thing seemed ready to collapse. Not an object was to be seen, aside from the old building, apparently deserted and forsaken. There were no signs of life; not even the familiar smoke coming from the old chimney. One would have to travel a long distance to find more desolate-appearing premises, and yet, beneath the roughly-sketched picture, the artist had written the title of John Howard Payne's immortal poem, "Home, Sweet Home."

At first thought it was the meeting of the sublime and the ridiculous on a common level. But it led me to thinking. Probably not two miles away stood the marble mansion of the man who could count his money by the million. His wife and children im-

ported their fine clothing from Paris, and wore diamonds that would lighten up the face of any negro in the South. They rode in a fine carriage, had a score of servants to wait on them, walked on floors covered with rugs of Damascus, ate the richest of foods, entertained the most distinguished people in the land, slept upon downy beds and never knew want.

A glance at this mansion from without was enough to give rise to the sin of covetousness. The appearance of the building was artistic in every way. An ornamental fence, a charming lawn, beautiful shade trees, fragrant flowers, and sparkling fountains, made a picture that was the envy of every lover of the beautiful. To write beneath such a picture " Home, Sweet Home " would have seemed most fitting indeed.

How can we compare the dilapidated negro cabin with the home of the elite? Around one poverty seems to reign, while the other abounds in wealth. But " sweet home " is not always found within the gilded walls. Delightful lawns, beautiful shade trees, lovely flowers and sparkling fountains do not always indicate happy hearts. Much of the seeming happiness of the rich and even the gifted, may be only outward. In this world there is an amazing amount of deceit with a gilded surface.

In the attempt to combine the ridiculous with the sublime may not our artist have unwittingly sketched much of the real in life? There is probably more genuine happiness in the humble homes of our land than may be found within the walls of the costly mansions and palaces. Were an angel from beyond the stars to visit all the homes in this fair America and write "Sweet Home" in letters of gold upon the doors behind which peace reigns supreme, we should probably behold the result with profound amazement. The more humble would be delighted with the title that came to them unsought, while thousands of the rich and influential would be made thrice miserable because the angel had refused to adorn their costly doors with the shining title. But, after all, how true the lines of Payne:

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble there's no place like home!
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home! home! sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;
Oh, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds singing gaily that come at my call—
Give me them—and the peace of mind dearer than all!
Home! home! sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!

The Mistake—How Corrected?

I once baptized a very earnest woman who stood well in the city where she resided, and where her husband carried on a large mercantile business. She had long been connected with one of the denominations of the city, and of course attired herself to suit the society in which she moved. But she got to attending the Brethren services quite regularly, her husband being a member of long standing. In those days much attention was given to the New Testament doctrines. I thought it in perfect keeping with my calling as a minister to preach at least one doctrinal sermon a month. The idea was to indoctrinate the members and convert sinners. The people would turn out to hear discourses of that class more readily than they turn out to listen to the easy-going sermons of today.

The woman referred to was sincere. She meant to do the right thing and sought for the truth with commendable earnestness. She would listen to a discourse on trine immersion with intense interest, and never once think of complaining because the minister took up the whole of one hour presenting his arguments. Then there were sermons on the design of baptism, feet-washing as a religious rite, the Lord's supper as a gospel institution and the

loaf and cup of the New Testament. A sermon on the philosophy of nonconformity helped the woman to do some right thinking, but just how to get the full consent of her mind to give up her fashionable attire proved the hard struggle in her religious experience.

But she finally reached a decision. Many came out on the Lord's side and demanded New Testament baptism. She was among the number, and her coming to the church caused no little stir among her old acquaintances. The woman was not difficult to baptize. She had strong nerves and entered the water with the full determination that the watergrave should serve as a distinct line separating her former religious life from the life that she was to live in later years. That was a bright day for the church as well as for the band of believers who had been buried with Christ in the holy act of Christian baptism. All of them had pledged themselves to live a life of faithfulness until death, and so I felt assured that they would.

But a week or more after the inspiring services at the water side I chanced to meet the sister in question, on a crowded street, attired in her fine, fashionable dress bonnet, looking just as she did when identified with her former church. There were scores of members on the street that day, and,

of course, they too would meet the sister and would wonder what all this meant. I shook hands with her, talked with her quite a while, for she was very entertaining, but all the time pretended not to notice that very fashionable headgear. I said not one word to the sister about her appearance, though I had an excellent opportunity of doing so.

An hour later I had time to think. I knew that the sister appearing on the street in that manner would cause a talk, and according to the church custom of the times it would be necessary to send some deacons to admonish her and instruct her more perfectly. Then it occurred to me that newborn creatures in the kingdom of God are sometimes very tender, and that a little unskillful handling might cripple them spiritually for life. So, leaving the deacons and everybody else out of the question, I called on a very devout sister, one who stood well with the church and who was held in high esteem by the sister in question. I told her of the situation and suggested that she take the matter in hand, saying nothing to others about it.

I left the case with the sister and went on about my work; but that was the last time I ever saw that fashionable bonnet. The woman lived a very consistent and exemplary life and nearly thirty years later was laid to rest by the side of her hus-

band. They both died in the faith, beloved and respected by a large circle of friends. Probably to her dying day the sister never knew anything about the part I took in having her assisted in a critical period of her early Christian life. And not till ten years after the occurrence did the sister, whom I sent, report to me the results of her visit.

This experience has ever since prompted me to exercise all possible discretion in dealing with members who unintentionally make mistakes. Just one wrong move upon the part of church officials, in such instances, may sometimes prove disastrous. Young converts are sensitive. At times they are tender. They may even be weak in the faith, and for these reasons ought to have the best of care. We often send deacons to look after erring ones when we ought to send sisters. When a member of the family gets dangerously sick we frequently employ a well-trained nurse. We want some one who knows how to take care of the sick. Why not exercise the same judgment when one of the members of the flock becomes weak or sick spiritually? Did we deal more wisely in matters of this sort, we might be the means, in the hands of God, of converting many more people from the error of their way.

Would Not Charge a Preacher.

Some distance south of Gainesville, Fla., is the charming little town of Micanopy. Less than one hundred years ago it was a prosperous Indian village, where lived the powerful Indian chief, after whom the village was named. Near by is one of Florida's picturesque lakes, bearing the same name. One could spend weeks here, among the old settlers, listening to Indian legends, and to the stories that are told about the accomplishments of the famous chief and his charming daughter.

But when I visited the village, while residing in the State, some years ago, it was a place of some little business, but more generally noted for its delightful orange groves. It was laid out in lots, some small, for business purposes, but most of them varied in size from one to five acres. All of these lots were taken up with orange groves. A man with two acres would leave room enough for his house, a few other small buildings, and plant the rest of his land in orange trees. The trees, when I saw them, were large, bore well, and gave the little town the appearance of one vast orange grove, with houses here and there nestled among the evergreen trees. An acre or two of orange trees supported a family. Little work was required to care for the trees, and

never before nor since have I seen people so contented as these people appeared to be. They seemed to have all their hearts could wish, and felt that, so far as a living was concerned, they were absolutely independent.

In my rounds, through the middle part of Florida, business called me to the town, and I put up one night at a boarding-house kept by the widow Knox. A number of others were boarding at the same place. The landlady seemed very kind to all present. In the morning I paid my bill, and went on about my business. Six months later it became necessary for me to visit Micanopy again. It was near midnight when I reached the town. I turned in at the same house where I stopped before, and by a young man was shown into the same neatly-furnished upper room in which I had slept on my previous visit.

After partaking of a good breakfast, the next morning, I asked the kind lady what my bill was. She said, "Fifty cents." I tendered her a silver half dollar. She reached her hand to take it, then suddenly letting her hand drop, she looked me full in the eye, and nervously said: "I am informed, sir, that you are a minister." I told her I was. She then said, "I never charge a minister for staying in my house." I told her that I did not wish my position as a minister to exempt me from paying my hotel

bills, as I was traveling on business. She insisted upon adhering strictly to her rule. After thanking her for her kindness, and wishing her success and much happiness in life, I went away from that house, saying to myself, "There are more good people in this world than it gets credit for." All day long these words rang in my ears: "I never charge a minister for staying in my house."

House-to-House Talks.

There is one period in my ministerial experience that I often think about with pleasure. I was then living in a new country, where one often had to ride for miles in going from one settlement to another. I worked during the week, but preached every Sunday, sometimes twice.

I had a monthly appointment in a settlement twelve miles from home. I often rode to this place on Saturday evening. The entire route was through the woods, and on the way I passed but few houses. I usually traveled alone, and this gave me plenty of time to think and prepare some of my sermons. On horseback, in the woods, is a most excellent place for meditation. About trees there is something that is inspiring, and the interesting scenery is ever changing, while about the moving horse and preacher there is a harmony of action that is restful to the mind. They soon learn to understand each other and in time their confidence in one another becomes mutual. A more faithful creature never existed than the preacher's trusty horse.

Well, I would ride up to a plain house where the conveniences were few and the people poor, but everybody would come out to the gate to shake hands. One was made to feel welcome. In the

evening the neighbors began coming in. Word had been sent around that the preacher would be there that night and would give a Bible talk. Some of these people would come a mile or two, most of them walking, and nearly all carrying lanterns. They gathered into a large room, sitting on anything that could be made to serve the purpose of a seat. Here were the fathers and mothers with their children, all anxious for this kind of a gathering.

The meeting was informal, in most every way, and everybody felt easy. I usually occupied a chair by the table. A few hymns were sung, a portion of Scripture read, and then we had prayer. It was like a large family around the family altar. Then another Scripture was read and I commenced my Bible talk. While making these talks I always sat. To the people it did not seem like preaching, it was just talking. It was a heart-to-heart talk; a talk where I could meet parents and children face to face, and have them near me while the old story was being told.

Perhaps the talk was about Abraham, the man of faith and destiny. Here I could sit and tell the story of the faithful man from the time he was a young man in Ur of Chaldea until his body was placed by the side of that of his wife in the cave at

Hebron. My talk would last probably an hour, and then there was more singing and another season of prayer. Before dismissing I would ask about our next Bible talk when I came again. There was always some one ready to call for the next meeting.

One time a neighbor requested that the next meeting be held at his place. He had some friends that he would be pleased to have present. When the time came I had the privilege of occupying an old armchair, in an old-fashioned Southern house, warmed by a cheerful fire in the great fireplace. His neighbors and friends were there, for the meeting was in his house and he felt at liberty to invite them. This was probably the best meeting of the kind that we held in the neighborhood, for the surroundings were most interesting.

At the close of the services there was general handshaking. No one seemed in a hurry. It was a sort of a family affair, with religion mixed in, and the people somehow got no small amount of good out of it. The next day we would have regular preaching at the schoolhouse near by. And thus the work continued from month to month.

Since then years have come and gone, but I have often thought that should it ever fall to my lot to engage in evangelistic work, in a new locality, I would again introduce my Bible meetings, and in

this way carry the Gospel into the homes of the people. I would give much attention to that class of teaching that would take me from house to house. On these occasions I would talk to the parents and the children, having them face to face, listening to the interesting story of the Bible. Probably we need more of this class of work. It brings the Gospel where the people are, and it is there that it makes the best impression on them.

The Good Name.

On the streets of a Southern village I met an aged man, borne down in deep sorrow. I met him for the first time years before. He was then a happy man, possessing a lovely home, engaged in a profitable business and had around him sons and daughters that cheered his heart. I then regarded him as the most fortunate of men. A more charming home could not have been found in the "Land of Flowers." It was his boast that the bolt of his door was never turned in the evening until all the children were safe in the family fold. He never had to lament and ask, "Oh, where is my boy tonight?" He saw that his children were safe at home at reasonable hours, and thus kept away from the haunts of vice.

He had made money, and gathered much property around him. A good living the balance of his life seemed fully assured. Along that line he had nothing that needed to worry him in the least. He was known far and near, and no man had a better name or a better reputation.

But when I met him on the village street a wonderful change had come over him. All of his property had been swept away. His charming home was gone, his companion in life, the mother of his

children, was no more, and his reputation in the business world was ruined. The time was when nearly every man in the country looked up to him, but now all, save a few close friends, paid little attention to him.

In an unguarded moment he had affixed his good name to a large bond. This he did to help a son-in-law rise in business. For a time business flourished, but reverses came, the young man went down and dragged the aged father with him. The earnings of many years disappeared inside of a few months. A business that had required years to establish had to be given up, and everything in sight had to be sacrificed. The good name, that was of more value than the man's property and business, had also to suffer, and be divested of its power in social and financial circles.

As I conversed with him he could only lament his great loss, feeling that there was nothing left in this world for him but the waiting grave. Everything that had been of any interest to him was gone and the grave, the waiting grave, was his only earthly hope. He censured no one, but simply lamented. Not an unkind word escaped his lips, but he grieved and at times wept.

He, of course, saw his mistake, but only when it was too late. His name was good on any bond, but

in this instance it proved his ruination. His name was worth thousands of dollars, but he had used it one time too often, or rather he had made an unwise use of it. With his name went his home, his other property and his business. One may think a name is a small matter, but in this instance it proved of wonderful consequence.

It may require years to secure a good name, a name of value in the social and financial world, but how quickly can it be divested of its power! The moral of all this is, that the man who does not have a good name should strive for it. Such a name is worth the effort of a lifetime. But when it is once obtained, it is worth taking care of. Let people be careful where they allow their names to be used, and then be equally careful regarding the reproaches that may be heaped upon a good name. Too many people, both young and old, do not value a good name as they should. In an unguarded moment one may affix his name to an instrument of writing that will sweep away his home and his business, and divest the good name of every element of power in the commercial world. It may be well for my readers to think of the fate of the unfortunate old man, who lamented as he walked the streets of the little Southern village.

Testing Things.

I once spent several hours with a successful farmer, and the conversation drifted onto seed corn, for the farmers at that time were planting their crops. On account of the short season the summer before, the farmer's corn did not ripen well, so he sent away for seed corn. When the corn arrived he took one hundred grains and planted them in a box that was kept in a warm room. In due time the corn grew and one hundred sprouts were counted. He knew from this that every grain of his seed corn could be depended upon. He said that he never planted corn without first testing it in this way.

His experience put me to thinking about testing people and even doctrines and methods. It might be well for the church to test men before placing too great responsibilities on them. If they are to be placed in charge of mission points, we should know what may be expected of them. Men for this class of work should first be faithful, and then they should show that they have the ability to teach others. Without these two special qualifications they ought not to be entrusted with important and far-reaching duties.

Ministers should also be tested before they are ad-

vanced to the second degree of the ministry, or before they are ordained at least. It is one thing for a young brother to be elected to the ministry, but quite another thing for him to preach. If, after a fair trial, it becomes evident that he cannot preach, why should he be advanced! His efforts, while in the first degree, ought to settle the question as to whether he has the ability to become a useful minister. The same principle might apply to ministers before they are ordained.

We need not test what is plainly stated in the Bible, for we know that to be correct. But we may have ideas of our own that need to be tested. Possibly a little testing might convince us that we are mistaken. A theory that will not pass muster with the best informed Bible students and the most devout Christians, might well put its advocates to thinking. I know that the minority is often in the right, but this does not prove that the majority is always mistaken. "Prove all things," says Paul, "and hold fast that which is good."

Our methods, or ways of doing things, might be tested, and if they will not stand the test, they should be dropped, or exchanged for others. A method may work all right for one generation and yet not be the thing for the next generation. Nothing short of the best should satisfy the earnest

Christian worker; hence the importance of proving, or testing all things. We can judge of methods by the results. If these are not satisfactory there may be something wrong, and if we are wise we will refuse to hold fast that which is not good.

There are people who are afraid to have their pet theories, or favorite methods, tested. They feel too uncertain about the results. They think that what has all along been good enough for them, should be good enough for everybody else. They may be right, and then, on the other hand, they may be mistaken. Proving all things, as Paul suggests, would settle it, and why not have it settled? The good will always stand the test. Yes, why not be as wise as was the wide-awake farmer who tested his corn before planting it?

Talking Religion.

I happened to know a man who became an enthusiastic supporter of the lodge in which he had taken membership. In his home he talked much about his lodge, telling how this family had been helped, how atention was given to a sick man, how the doctor bill was paid for another, and in what way he considered his lodge superior to any church known to him. And thus he continued talking lodge, always telling the good side, of course, until the wife finally concluded that she would become a member of some secret order admitting women.

She became delighted and at the table joined her husband in talks about the good the lodges were doing. With them it was all lodge and no church, and in this atmosphere the children of the family grew to manhood and womanhood, and it takes no prophet to tell how it happened that they all turned out to be zealous lodge people. It was all because the father began talking lodge in his family and kept it up. The father and mother did not have to persuade their children to accept the lodge ideas, they grew up in that atmosphere and accepted lodge principles of their own accord.

There is nothing strange about this. It is simply natural. Parents who continually talk Catholicism

in the family, from the time their children are babes, until they are old enough to think for themselves, are certain to send out from their homes a little band of earnest Catholics. The same principle will hold good with any denomination. It will hold good with the principles held by the Brethren. If we want our children to grow to manhood and womanhood, filled with love and respect for the Brethren, we must talk about the teachings of the church, the sermons preached, the good books printed, the interesting matter in our papers, the goodly men and the sainted women. We must talk about the good that is being done, become interested in the work of the church, and all her undertakings. We must have something good to say about her earnest preachers and the sermons they preach, being sure, at all times, to throw the mantle of charity over the defects as they come to our notice.

This way of talking will, of course, lead to the Bible, and to the principles it teaches, and thus the doctrine of the church will become instilled in the hearts of the children. We need not make any special effort to get the principles and love of the Brethren church into the hearts of the boys and girls, but simply permit them to grow up in this kind of a religious atmosphere and they will read-

ily take to the Brethren church in preference to all others.

This kind of talking and environment may not make any politicians, but it will make Christians by the hundreds. It may be with your boys like it was with Bro. Wilbur Stover, of India, when he was a boy in school. Politics ran high in the school and the other boys tried to find out whether Wilbur, as they called him, was a Democrat or a Republican. He was told that he must take his stand and let the boys know to what party he held. In his bewilderment he said that he was neither a Republican nor a Democrat, he was a "Dunker." He went home and repeated the incident to his mother, and she told him that his answer was all right.

The circumstance shows the kind of an atmosphere in which the boy had been raised. His parents had talked the right kind of religion, and the boy early imbibed correct ideas, and they are now a part of the mental and moral make-up of the man. These incidents should prove helpful to parents and others who wish to help those around them religiously or otherwise. There is nothing like living out what we believe, and then talking it as opportunity and prudence may present occasion. Some people may not be able to talk fluently about what they believe to be right, but if they will commence

early enough, and put in a whole lifetime at it, they are sure to see its effect in their own families as well as among their neighbors.

From most homes the time-honored altar, at which our godly parents bowed and prayed, has been removed. We no more hear the songs of Zion and the earnest pleading in the evening or in the morning as in days of yore. This is a busy world. Every person is living the strenuous life. There may be a time to jest and a time to play, but there seems to be no time to pray. Out of twenty-four hours, each day, there is no hour of prayer, though there may be hours for everything else. Certainly we should have the family altar restored in some way. It is the very foundation of the church as well as the home. If it is not convenient to pray in the evening, pray in the morning. If the family and inmates of the house cannot be collected around the center table, collect them around the table in the dining room. A fixed hour in the living room, in the evening, might be arranged for, and called the hour of prayer. If this cannot be done, ten minutes at the breakfast table, reading the Scriptures and praying, will bring comfort and blessings for the day.

Killing the Church.

I sat at the table of a highly respected and well-to-do family in one of the Southern States. The conversation drifted to the history and death of a relative of great wealth, and widely known in most of the States. The lady of the house remarked, "Yes, and Aunty just killed Uncle with the rich and unhealthy food with which her table was daily supplied." It was sad to hear her thus speak of her uncle's death. But the heart was too full to keep back the truth. The man was worth his millions, and much was said in the leading journals about his achievements and his death, but not a line was printed setting forth the fact as it was stated by the lady at the table.

All over this country there are men and women going to untimely graves just for the want of healthy and nourishing food. Unwise cooks and richly-laden tables are rapidly filling the graves in the city of the dead. This is sad, but there may be something sadder yet.

Once upon a time I was told of an able preacher who was killing the church over which he presided, by constantly preaching to his members concerning the defects of other congregations, and some of the mistakes of a few of his own flock. Instead of giv-

ing his people the healthy and nourishing Gospel food that they so greatly needed, and for which they earnestly plead, he fed them on that which only a few of the stronger could endure, and retain their spiritual life. The man was killing his church, and no one seemed to have the courage to tell him of his terrible mistake.

What is said of this instance may, in a measure, apply to a score of others. Preachers often spend too much time parading the defects of the church before their members. They fill their souls with discouraging and unhealthy thoughts, instead of the spiritual food that is so essential to spiritual growth. No church can thrive on such preaching. You might as well look for healthy children in a family where the most unhealthy food is served at all the meals.

It is a sad experience for the sheep of the Master's flock to go to the house of God, Sunday after Sunday, expecting to be fed on the bread that cometh down from heaven, and be put off with the undesirable news picked up here and there, among people noted for their defects in life. People having this experience go away from the religious sanctuary disappointed. It is only the nourishment that comes from above that can help men and women to the higher and better life.

In order to retain spiritual growth in a congregation, the members must be well supplied with the nourishing food that comes from above. Some of them must be fed more or less on the sincere milk of the Word, while others can bear strong meat. But under no circumstances should the precious moments of the Lord's Day service be spent parading either the defects of the church or the evils of the world before those hungering and thirsting after righteousness. (Jesus told Peter to feed both the sheep and the lambs, and were more attention given to this consideration we would hear and see far less of weak members going astray.) Let every minister see to it, that the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, is properly fed and encouraged. He ought to be as ready to rebuke the man who fills the minds of his members with the faults and defects of others as he is to rebuke the one who would preach another Gospel. If we want strong, healthy members we must feed them upon the Bread of Heaven, as the Lord intended.

Some Observations at Church.

While seated in the pulpit, one Sunday morning, I observed a care-worn woman entering, carrying one child and leading another. Three other children followed. She gathered them around her as a hen would her little chicks. Presently the husband entered, a strong man, looking as though he enjoyed life as well as the table. He picked out a good, comfortable seat at one end of the bench, and fixed himself to take things easy. So far as I could discover he had no concern about the mother and her five children. He came to meeting to enjoy it, and meant to get all the good possible out of the service.

I looked at the woman. She seemed tired and yet she did her best to appear cheerful. Hers were good children, accustomed to attending services, and yet they required her constant attention. She was a hard-working woman in her home, for the family was poor. Instead of having to care for the entire little flock she should have been relieved in some manner. I wondered why that strong husband of hers could not have taken at least two of the children to the seat with him. That would have been a relief to the overworked mother. Then it would have looked manly for him to have assumed at

least a part of the family burden. It would have given the mother a better opportunity to enjoy the service and get some of the rest she needed. I certainly pitied the woman, and felt very much like preaching a sermon on the text, "Husbands, love your wives."

Presently a man entered, carrying a child, which he took care of during the meeting. His wife looked real cheerful and happy. She occupied another seat with some of the larger children. To me that looked sensible, and I felt like commending the man for his fatherly and sensible conduct. His good wife got the full benefit of the service and went away from that meeting a stronger woman, spiritually. To her the service was restful as well as instructive.

Another woman entered, accompanied by a few well-fed children. In appearance she was all sunshine, and enjoyed this world for all there was in it. Generally speaking, she was a good mother, a most obliging neighbor and passed as a dutiful church member. She was always ready for any work around the meetinghouse and especially at love feast times, but in some way did not seem to enter fully into the spirit of a service.

As soon as she was seated, she passed out a cooky to each of her children, and offered some to other children. Her idea of raising children was to dress

them comfortably and feed them well. It never occurred to her most obliging soul that it is ill manners to eat in church, and that she was simply teaching her little folks bad manners, to say nothing of the tendency of her conduct to make other children in the house discontented and fretful.

All of this occurred in an out-of-the-way place. Properly speaking, the last mother named should have, from the start, trained her children not to eat in church. It is bad church ethics. In the former case the husband might have occupied a seat with his wife and children, but this meeting was in a locality where the men occupied one side of the house and the women the other.

The Friend of Birds.

Among living creatures there is nothing that is more admired than birds. The ease with which they make their way through the air, and the perfect freedom they enjoy, make them the envy of many a thinking person. One never grows tired watching birds on the wing, or as they leap from limb to limb among the trees. They seem to be at home on the swinging branch of a lofty tree, on the ground, or while passing through the air. For grace and independence of movements there is nothing to equal them. To be able to navigate the air has been the ambition of civilized man for all generations. Man longs to fly like a bird and enjoy the same freedom of the air. In a limited way he may be able to reach the object of his ambition, but he is not likely to enjoy the freedom which, by right of creation, belongs to the fowls of the air.

Man has never made himself the friend of the little feathered beings. He has chosen rather to be known as their enemy. He has acted like an enemy. From boyhood he has made it a point in life to frighten the birds. He treats them as enemies and outlaws, not knowing, seemingly, that they are man's best friends. True, they may eat some of the

delicious fruits and destroy a little grain, but, on the other hand, each bird destroys thousands of worms and bugs that harm growing crops. In this way he more than pays for his living.

It would be delightful if man could live on friendly terms with the interesting birds of the country. Let him treat them kindly and cultivate their friendship, and they will show the utmost confidence in him. There are parks in which birds are never frightened by man and they have become as tame as kittens. Were we always to treat them kindly, they would soon have for us the love that casteth out all fear.

If men and women would live on better terms with the birds around them, they would be better and happier beings. They would often feed the lovely little creatures, provide watering places for them and learn to take an interest in their welfare. They would soon find themselves less selfish, and discover that this world, with its myriads of living objects, is a great deal better place than they had been led to think. They would be charmed by the little tokens of confidence and regard, shown by the birds that visit their premises. They would study their habits and become interested in their migration movements, as well as in their great meetings, for our friends of the air have their conventions, discuss

their questions and problems, reach conclusions, and act on them as their bird wisdom may direct.

In this connection we are reminded of one of the sights that might have been witnessed in Paris a few years ago. There was a woman who daily fed the birds in the gardens of the Tuileries. No one seemed to know the lady, and in fact she spoke to no one, but made it her business to cultivate a close acquaintance with her little friends of the air and feed them. A gentleman who had the privilege of witnessing the scene gives this description of the woman and her manner of dealing with her feathered companions:

"Crossing the Tuileries Garden on one of the late mild days, my attention was attracted by an immense commotion among the sparrows which abound in that locality. They were chattering and flying to and fro, and finally collected in swarms at a single point. There I saw the cause of their agitation, the well-known bird-charmer of the Tuileries Garden. She is a person about thirty years of age, pale, with very black hair, dressed in the deepest mouring and wearing no bonnet. She was surrounded by birds that hopped and perched right at her feet, or flew circling round her head, apparently without the slightest fear.

"She would hold out a bit of bread, and instantly three or four would hover around it with rapidly-whirling wings, like humming birds around a flower, some perching on her fingers, while others would peck at the coveted

morsel on the wing. Then she would throw crumbs into the air, which would be adroitly caught by the swiftest-winged birds before they reached the ground. A shower of crumbs brought the little creatures to her feet like chickens, nor did the presence of the by-standers, who soon collected in great numbers, appear to terrify her proteges in the least. They seemed to feel perfectly secure in the presence of their benefactress. She walked slowly on, followed and surrounded by hundreds of the eager, fluttering birds."

He who would number his friends by the hundred may do well to cultivate the friendship of the birds.

The Anointing.

It was one Sunday afternoon. Thus far the day had been pleasantly spent. The Sunday-school lesson in the morning was about Jesus the Good Shepherd. We had also listened to an excellent sermon concerning the leaven in three measures of meal. We felt that we had something on which to meditate during the week. But there was to be a change in the line of thought, for the time at least.

A young sister had been sick for weeks. She had suffered much, but during all her illness not a murmur or complaint had escaped her lips. To all who visited her she appeared as one perfectly resigned to the will of God. While in good health she was much beloved, but in her sickness she seemed to have drawn the members still closer to her, and therefore closer to God. She, however, desired the anointing, and had called for the elders to perform the sacred and solemn rite. They came at her request, and others came also.

An air of solemnity seemed to pervade the place. All felt that they had come together for no ordinary purpose. Without the gentle showers were coming down, and all nature was smiling. Every flower and every spear of grass appeared to be delighted, for they were drinking in the forces that

were dropping from the clouds. But why should nature do anything but rejoice! The hand that made the smiling vegetation was diffusing his blessings through the clouds. It is not too much to say that the scene without was in keeping with the scene within. The earnest men and women of God had come together, seeking a blessing first for the young sister and then for themselves. They knew that the Father of our spirits had promised to bless those who in good faith call for the anointing. In appearance they may have seemed sad, but within there was joy in the Holy Ghost.

Around the well-kept couch, where lay the weak form, gathered the fervent in prayer, and appealed to God for help, for we all realized that he can and will aid where no earthly physician can. The elders applied the oil in the name of the Lord, as directed in James 5: 14. They prayed that the Lord would restore the young sister to health, for they felt that the young pilgrim might be of some use in the Master's work. Then they prayed that her sins might all be forgiven. They had no doubt but that their earnest prayer would, in some manner, be answered, for to the Lord they had said, "Not our will, but thine, O Lord, be done." He who can see the end from the beginning, has his way of answering prayers, and those who have a spiritual

insight into God's dealings in this world, can see answers where the less spiritual cannot.

But in the room, on this occasion, the gentle showers of grace were coming down, and the spiritual natures were being refreshed. Hope was springing up in one soul after another. Good impressions were made upon the hearts, and more than one person present resolved from that hour to live a more devoted life. One act of kindness followed another, and no person thought of being anything else but just as good as his abilities and opportunities would permit. Smiles were seen playing over the face of the young sister. The gentle showers of grace, from even beyond the clouds, had reached her soul. Hope revived, the faith grew stronger, and she felt perfectly resigned to the will of the Great Being who had given her her form as well as her soul. She was back again in the Potter's hands, this time to be moulded either for use in God's house upon the earth or for use in the great house beyond the stars. She was not troubled. Why should she be! Who can deal more gently with the vessel than the potter who formed it, gave it its shape and fitted it for use? It was the soul, this time, to which the potter was giving special attention. It needed some finishing touches, and how important that these touches be

given by one who is not only a moulder, but an artist as well.

But as I walked away from the sister's earthly home I wondered why more of the sick do not call for the elders to come and anoint them? There is so much in the anointing. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." There are so many ways in which the sick may be saved. Even the life may be prolonged, for he who gave life can lengthen it. He who made the vessel can also renew the bonds of life. He one time added fifteen years to the life of a king. But at other times he permits the transplanting to take place early. I say he permits it, for he who made all things knows what is best for the plant as well as for the vessel that contains the plant.

And then we read, "The Lord shall raise him up." This gives hope. It strengthens the faith, and it is through the hope and faith that the Heavenly Physician can do most effectual work for the drooping spirit. As the raindrops from the clouds prolong the life of plants, so will the showers of grace, received into the soul, add strength to the outer as well as to the inner life. "If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." The best of all promises! If the tender plant must be transplanted, let it first be cleansed and every defect re-

moved. If it is to remain upon the earth, it is only the better for the forgiveness. Then, why not call for the anointing! The hand of God is in it.

Years ago a blind man came to our meetinghouse to conduct a singing-class. He was an expert in music and knew how to teach it. His books were made for the blind. By passing his fingers over the raised lines he could read readily. He needed no light to read by. The first evening the lamps in the meetinghouse gave very poor light, so much so that most people could not see to read. The blind teacher did not know the difference. He called out the number of the hymn and proceeded to sing. As the people could not see well but few of them helped to sing. A preacher in the congregation then rose and remarked that the blind man was more fortunate than most people, for he could read whether there was any light or not. Everybody smiled. The blind man said he never thought of it in that way before. Possibly more of us might take that view of our misfortunes.

The Seed We Are Sowing.

Some time in the eighties a man, interested in bee culture, drove along the road, in a certain section of Illinois, and scattered sweet clover seed as he went. He threw out small quantities of seed, first on one side of the road and then on the other. The seed grew, the plant spread, and now, in midsummer, the roads for miles and miles in every direction, are lined with the sweet clover. Most farmers say the plant is a nuisance, and that it is spreading to their fields. A few people see some good in it, especially the bee men and those who permit their cattle to graze by the roadside. But the sweet clover is there, and it is there to stay, all because some man scattered a small amount of seed, here and there, as he passed along.

Well, how about the seed that we purpose sowing as we journey down through life's lane? We are told that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Then, on the other hand, we sow for others to reap. One generation sows the seed that may be reaped by the next generation. Parents sow seed for their children to reap, and one neighbor sows seed that must, sooner or later, be reaped by the whole neighborhood.

We are reminded of a lady who is prominent in

wealthy and fashionable society. For a time the eyes of the whole world were centered on her, first on account of the prominency of her family, and, second, on account of her womanly personality. It might be said of her, at one time, that she was the belle of civilization. She was admired and respected by the best people on two continents. But there came an unfortunate day for her as well as for a large class of her admirers. She fell to smoking cigarettes, and even went so far as to say that she considered the habit ladylike. This she said without considering how much bad seed she was sowing for others to reap. Thousands of young ladies took up the habit of smoking cigarettes, not because they particularly liked smoking, but because they were weak enough to be induced to follow a foolish and hurtful example, set by a prominent young woman. In the course of a few weeks seeds of this kind were sown in every fashionable section in the United States, and to some extent in other countries.

I am told of another instance of seed sowing. A mother moved into town with her two talented and beautiful daughters. The mother was one of those sensible women who believe in preparing girls for unselfishness in the world, rather than for fashionable society. As was her custom, she dressed her

girls plainly, but neatly and well. They wore good clothing, but the garments were plainly made. When the two strange girls appeared in school there was no little sensation among the fashionable girls. They gradually drew apart from the new girls, and practically left them without any associates among what were known as the best girls in school. This so mortified the two girls that they in tears plead with their mother to either dress them as the other girls were attired, or not ask them to go to school any more.

The mother knew a good thing when she saw it, and further knew that with care the fittest would survive. So she had a good, motherly talk with the girls, and told them, that they did not move into town with a view of being wrongly moulded by people who were not doing the right thing, but their purpose should be to stand for the right and that which is sensible, and help others to reach a higher and better plane of living. Instead of having the fashionable mould her girls, she insisted on her girls moulding them, if such a thing should be possible.

The girls caught the spirit of their wise mother. Continuing their school work, they secured the best grade in the school and were soon looked upon as the brightest and best-behaved girls in town They

made a record in their studies that placed them at the head of everything in school. In a short time other girls sought their society and help, and it was not many months until all the best girls were their close friends. As a result, the other girls began to dress plainer, and in time the town became noted for its sensible, intelligent and cultured young women. All of this came from sowing the right kind of seed. It certainly pays to sow good seed.

Angels Weeping.

There came to my desk a letter unlike anything received for years. It showed certain conditions that deserve more than a passing notice, and I tell the story for the benefit of others.

A devout Christian mother has raised a family of children. She has gathered around her boys and girls that ought to be a credit to any mother. From the time her children were babes she has been exceedingly careful how she conducted herself in their presence. Not an unbecoming word has intentionally escaped her lips. Her children have been taught to love the Bible and even to reverence the church. They have a great regard for their mother's church, believing that it is the true church of God. In the presence of her children she has never spoken one uncomplimentary word about the church or any of the members. Her most earnest desire has been to raise her children for the Lord, and for that reason she has endeavored to cultivate in them a right regard for the church and all those connected with the body of Christ.

As a result her children held the members in high esteem, and especially the ministers. They looked upon a minister of the Brethren church as a truly consecrated man, who, in every particular,

meant to do only the right thing. They knew a preacher only to love and respect him. But there came into her neighborhood a minister who proved not to be an exemplary man. Even his conversation is unbecoming a minister. His deportment is not up to the average conduct of well-meaning outsiders. The man seems to take no special interest in reaching a higher plane in the Christian life. As a minister he is no credit to either the church or the community. He is a detriment rather than a help to the cause.

The life of this minister is having a bad effect upon the sister's children. Some of them are old enough to unite with the church. But they have no confidence in this preacher. His manner of life does not impress them. They see and hear things that they know are not becoming one who stands behind the sacred desk. They listen to his preaching, but have no confidence in what he says, and will not unite with the church while he remains. The mother is troubled. She now sees no way of getting her children in the church. Her own faith is strong enough to carry her over troubles and obstacles of this kind, but that is not the case with her well-raised and intelligent children. She is at a point in life where she does not know what to do.

She can only weep and pray. She says it is enough to make the angels weep.

I need not tell who this preacher is. I do not know, but some day he will be called upon to give a fearful account at the judgment bar of God. But in the meantime it might be well for each minister to go into a self-examination, to see whether or not he is standing in the way of some earnest mother's children. It is possible that some preacher may be doing this very thing and not know it. It is a most fearful thing to be the means of keeping anyone out of heaven. But it is being done in more places than one, and well may the angels weep.

Snow-Bound.

On a certain Sunday morning, a few years ago, when the services in my home congregation closed, there was a raging snowstorm without. It looked like the beginning of a regular blizzard. At 3 P. M. I had an appointment at Batavia, fourteen miles away. The place could be reached by an electric line. A wanderer was to be restored to fellowship. The severity of the storm indicated that should I start I might possibly reach the meeting, but would not be permitted to return until the blizzard was over. But duty said, Go, and go I did. The "go" is the preacher's marching order, and it is always in force when there is something to do in the interest of the kingdom.

At the appointed hour the meeting was opened with singing and prayer as usual. Without the storm was quite severe; it had grown worse ever since it commenced, with no prospect of letting up. In the little congregation at Batavia there were, all told, thirty-two members, and over twenty of them were present at the meeting. There are not many congregations that can make a better showing when there is a regular blizzard on hand. I was glad I went, for I do like to meet with a people who can brave a storm to attend a members' meeting, or any other religious service.

It was announced for what purpose the meeting had been called. The brother who desired to return to the family of the Lord arose and told his own story. It was a touching story, and caused not a few tears to flow. The members voted unanimously in favor of receiving him back into the fold. The brother took his stand at a convenient place and the members came forward and received him. I always liked this way of doing. It reminded one of what we read in Luke 15, where the touching story is given concerning the returning prodigal. This is the way it was done on this occasion.

After this was over, a number of short speeches were made. Bro. Geo. D. Zollers was present, and if anybody can rejoice over a returning prodigal it is Bro. Zollers. So his speech was full of encouragement. It was a Christian welcome from beginning to end. Then followed other talks. They were all speeches of welcome. What grand meetings we might sometimes have when wayward ones are restored to the fold, if there could be more addresses of welcome given! Next we had a season of prayer, and then the hour was ended. To me it was a real spiritual meeting, and everybody went away feeling that they were greatly blessed, and that they will be only the better for having attended that service.

The meeting over, the next thing for me was to get home. The blizzard was still raging and increasing in severity. It was Sunday, that is true, but I do not object to traveling on the Lord's Day when I am about my Father's business. And so it was on this occasion. The Father's business must not be neglected. So I started for home, but at the end of two miles my way was blocked. The snow had drifted; the cuts were full of the "beautiful," and the car could not be moved. My only resource was a hotel, for it happened to be in a city that I had to abandon further progress.

How to spend the evening was the question. When going from home, for even a short time, I usually put a book in my pocket to read, but on this occasion I forgot to provide myself with a book. I had time here to read a small volume. At the hotel I called for a bunch of paper. Seated at a table in the office, I took out my fountain pen and thus opened up my sanctum. Men stood around. Some talked. Others read aloud, and a few of them smoked. The environments were by no means favorable for literary work. But my pen started in at the beginning of this chapter and went on to the end.

I am not in the habit of writing on Sunday, but when one is snow-bound, and has no book to read,

what better thing can he do! Had it not been for this particular experience, I probably would not have thought of telling about the good little meeting held in the midst of a blizzard. Nor would I have thought of telling how we sometimes receive an erring brother back into the fold. I might never have told of the speeches of welcome that were made. And this chapter for my book might never have been written. It is an ill wind that blows no good.

The Good Old Time.

I looked upon an old-time, but pleasing, picture. Two girls were seated on a large rug near the center of a large room. In front of them was the old fireplace, such as might have been seen in one of the Eastern or Southern States fifty years ago. The fire was burning brightly, and lighted up the entire room. At one side stood the long-handled frying pan and the great cook pot. The broom and tongs were near by, while the great churn stood farther away. The crane swung in the fireplace, ever ready to receive the great pot and suspend it over the fire. In front of the blazing fire lay seven fine apples, such as might be grown in any well-cultivated orchard. They were placed there to roast, one side at a time, and must needs be turned so as to get roasted through and through.

Probably hundreds of our aged readers will recall the time when they used to sit around the old fireplace to roast apples and to pop corn. Farther south chestnuts were added to the list. While the fire was doing its work, stories were related, riddles propounded, or the news of the day was told. Mother or father had something of interest to narrate, or the children had learned of something that proved interesting to listen to. Occasionally a short chap-

ter in some old book was read, for seldom were newspapers seen in those days. Most people were too poor to afford even candles, and the light from the fireplace answered the purpose of lamp and furnace combined. And thus the evenings were spent most pleasantly and even profitably.

More might have been learned by the aid of books, but books were scarce and costly. More public meetings might have been held, but the neighbors lived, as a rule, some distance apart, and preachers were not often seen. After the roasted apples, nuts, and pop corn were disposed of, then all became composed. The great Book was taken from the mantel over the fireplace, a chapter read, and then there was earnest prayer. A half hour later the ashes were shoveled onto the fire, and then all was quiet. The family was in the land of dreams.

This way of living may not have been very hygienic, but it produced good results. It kept the boys and girls at home of nights. Mother was never heard singing, "O where is my boy tonight?" He was at home, and so was the father. There may have been other causes for heartaches, but there were no down-town troubles. Children, in these good old times, as we are in the habit of speaking, may not have known so much about books as the present generation of young people, but then they

learned less of the current evils. They did not have the whole world to think about, with the sun, moon and stars thrown in, but they had the good and pure of a well-regulated home life for their mental as well as their soul training.

That kind of a life might not suit the present times so well, but it would be a blessing to have some of it mixed in with the present fast and careless way of living. Could we but have more of this old-fashioned home life, along with the fine educational advantages, what a noble generation of people might succeed the present one!

But that will not likely occur. With the generations of the past have gone their ways of living, and we must now labor to secure the best possible results from what we have at our command. It may be altogether possible that the young of today will, fifty years hence, look back and long for the good old times of their youth. Yes, the things we look upon as new, will by them be regarded as old. And so it goes. Our only comfort is to look forward to the time when the old shall pass away, and all things shall become new. So it is to the new that we are looking for happiness, after all. When we get over yonder, in the new world, we will no more long for the good old times in this world.

The Lord's Day.

The resolutions formed on Saturday night or Sunday morning determine the destiny of hundreds if not tens of thousands. The week's work is done, the wages for the toil of six days have been received, and it is a question as to how the morrow shall be spent. Sometimes the question is not settled until Sunday morning. The question is not confined to the day laborer, but it applies to the farmers and others as well.

Among worldly people there might possibly be some excuse for laying pleasure plans for the Lord's Day. They are unconverted, belong to the world and often seek to spend the Lord's Day in a worldly manner. To see them riding over the country, absenting themselves from the place of worship, and seeking the pleasure resorts is no more than might be expected. But why should Christians follow their example? Why should the believers lay pleasure plans on Saturday evening and then rise early on Sunday morning to execute them? Why should devout people leave the house of God and go out into the world for enjoyment?

I once knew a family that was never troubled with this question. In fact, I have known many families that probably never gave the question one

moment's thought. But this particular family had its face set Zionward, and on Saturday evening every member retired with the full purpose of spending the Lord's Day in a manner wholly becoming their profession. They arose on Sunday morning with that as a fixed purpose. It was no trouble for them to get ready for Sunday School and meeting. They did not have to make up their minds as to whether they would attend the services that day. That question was settled in their very makeup. It was therefore an easy matter for them to drive eight miles to church.

None of their neighbors thought of visiting them on Sunday forenoon. They knew that was their time to go to church, and everybody for miles around, and all along the road to the meeting-house, would have thought it strange if they did not go. The people who attended the services, from time to time, always expected to see that particular family on hand when the meeting was opened. If, for any reason, sickness should keep them at home, everybody in meeting, from the elder down, was wondering what was the matter. A family of this kind in a neighborhood is always a power for good.

Then I knew another family that was just the reverse. When Saturday evening came they had no

fixed purpose, unless it was to go visiting on Sunday, or work up some excuse for not going to meeting. If they meant to have a good time on the Lord's Day they could be up bright and early on Sunday morning, fully prepared to carry out their purpose without a hitch. They often complained that they could not get ready in time to reach the Sunday School at ten, two miles away, but it never seemed a task for them to drive ten miles to the picnic, or the camp meeting in the grove.

In appearance the father and mother looked like Christians. Seeing them driving along the road on Sunday morning, most any stranger would have regarded them as devout church members. But their conduct and looks did not correspond, and often caused many remarks among the outside people as well as among the members of the church. Their neighbors knew, of course, that they belonged to the church, but never could understand just why they seemed to be so little interested in what was going on at the meetinghouse. They were never known to take anybody along to preaching, but would now and then take some of their neighbors with them to other places.

The members of this family appeared to be guilty of no special sin, and yet they were no credit to the church. They belonged to the congregation, but

were a very poor light to the world. In fact they were almost a hindrance to the cause, their influence being mainly in the wrong direction. All of this was for the want of a fixed purpose to serve the Lord with a whole heart.

John Wesley was known far and wide to be much opposed to the wearing of jewelry. On a certain occasion a good sister took hold of a lady's hand, containing a number of rings, held it close to the eyes of the devout preacher and said: "Bro. Wesley, what do you think of that?" Wesley pretended not to see the costly, diamond-set rings, but remarked, "That is a very pretty hand." The compliment passed upon the beautiful hand had its effect, for the lady went to one side, removed her rings, and reappeared with hands that no one needed to be ashamed of. Mr. Wesley knew how to reach the lady's self-respect. And that is just wnat some people need to learn today. Let them learn how the wrong-doing of persons may be pointed out in such a manner as to bring about the necessary reformation, and the saving of the soul will have been accomplished.

The Wise Mother.

It is not every mother who knows how to handle a boy, inclined to shirk duty, in such a way as to teach him lessons that he is not likely to forget. But now and then we hear of those who can handle a boy of this kind with consummate skill and at the same time retain the love and respect of the boy. When the ordinary boy is fairly beaten at his own game, he generally knows it, confesses his defeat, and in his own mind determines that he is never going to be caught napping again. I have in mind two instances worth relating. One came to my notice through the press, and the other I got by personal observation.

Robbie's hat was lost! He could not find it anywhere, and his mother was waiting for him to go out and do an errand for her.

"Hurry up, Robbie!" she said, coming into the sitting-room. "I must have that yeast cake right away."

"I can't find my hat," said Robbie, beginning to search in every nook and corner. "I guess, mamma, you will have to get somebody else to do that errand for you. I can't go down-town bareheaded."

Just then a wagon drove into the yard, and Uncle Will's voice cried out:

"Where's Robbie? I want to take him out to the farm."

"Here I am, Uncle Will, I'm coming!" cried Robbie.

And what do you suppose? In less than two seconds Robbie's hat was on his head, and he was bounding out into the yard!

His mother could hardly help smiling at the suddenness with which the little lad had found his hat after he really wanted to go; but she knew that it would not do to let his deceit go unpunished, so she hurried out into the yard. Robbie was just climbing up into the farm-wagon.

"Uncle Will," said his mother, "Robbie was going to do an errand for me, but it took him so very long to find his hat—until he heard you call—that I am afraid he will not be back in time to go out to the farm with you today."

"Ah!" said Uncle Will; "I see. No, Robbie, I do not think I can wait for you today. But some other day, when your hat doesn't keep you from getting mamma's errands done first, we will have a fine ride out to the farm."

Robbie felt his disappointment keenly. But he was an honest-minded boy, and by the time he had returned with his mother's yeast cake, he was quite

ready to admit in his own heart that his punishment was just what he deserved.

"And, mamma," he said, as he kissed her lovingly, "I don't think I shall ever lose my hat that way again."

Robbie had learned a lesson, and his good mother was just wise enough not to let him know that she had purposely outgeneraled him.

The other instance was this: George was one of the best boys in the country to work. His home was on the farm, where there was plenty to do, and too much, he thought. Like most boys at the age of fourteen, he got very tired of the work, a little discouraged, thought he ought to have some rest, and made himself believe that he was sick. He quit his work and came to his mother with his complaint. She listened to his story, as a kind mother will listen to a boy who is in trouble. She told her son that it was not necessary for him to work if he was sick, that he probably needed rest, and that he should go up to his room, go to bed and remain there during the day. George did not like the idea of going to bed—for that was no part of his purpose when he decided to quit work and appeal to his mother. But she told him that there was no better place for a sick boy than in bed, and that he must not fail to do as she had directed.

Well, George reluctantly went to his room and was soon snugly covered up in his comfortable bed. His mother waited on him kindly, and even politely, giving him a plentiful supply of the kind of tea that she knew to be just the thing for his ailment. What were George's thoughts all this time no one seems to know. But for once, at least, he made up his mind that his mother knew something about boys. The next morning found George at the breakfast table and his mother waiting on him as attentively as though the boy had just recovered from a spell of sickness. He resumed his work, a more cheerful and wiser boy, and never more tried to play sick in the presence of his wise and loving mother.

Parents' Mistakes.

It is an ill wind that blows no good, and, by the way, there are many ill winds, but it is a question as to whether the good that follows these winds will ever atone for the ills. On seeing the mistakes of his father or mother many a child has resolved to live a better life than that set forth in the examples left him to imitate.

A father who loved his children well enough to provide for them all needed comforts came to the conclusion that his son should not spend much of his time reading. He was fearful that reading might lead the boy into indolent habits, and cause him to think more of his book than of his work. His highest idea of a boy was that he should be good and do plenty of work. The boy worked well, but he also loved books. He found them full of most excellent things to think and talk about. In fact he would work hard to get money to buy books, and then spend his evenings at home reading. This son did not like his father's idea of a boy, but he knew that it was his duty to obey, as far as possible, his earthly parent.

He, however, resolved in his own mind that should he ever become a father he would not attempt to raise a boy in that way. He felt that boys

were boys, and he hoped that the time would never come when he would forget that he, too, had been a boy. He thought it would be so nice if his father would talk with him about what he was reading. He longed to tell some one the interesting things he found in books. It would be such a pleasure to tell his parents all about them, but he had no encouragement in that direction, and so kept the information gained largely to himself. Still, while loving his parents, he fully made up his mind to encourage the boys who loved to read good books. The mistake of his father prompted him to carry out his resolve more faithfully than he probably otherwise would have done. It was a case of some good from an ill wind.

Another ill wind blew into the brain of a little girl a determination that she faithfully carried out when she reached the mature years of womanhood. Her mother was one of these faithful, hard-working women, but never thought of the consequences of sending her timid little daughter off to bed in a dark and uninviting room. The frightened little maiden would disrobe, jump into bed, thinking there might be something underneath, and crawl under the cover, head and all. Thus breathing the close air under the covers, she fell asleep. The child never grew brave, for she had no one to teach her how

to retire, with no fear in the heart, but trusting the Lord.

But the little girl, on reaching the years of womanhood, never made that mistake with her own little girls. It was her delight to make the going to bed as pleasant as possible for those who called her mother. She early taught them to prepare for retiring, for she thought the training would be for their good. She would then light them to bed, see that they were properly covered, kiss them good-night, and leave them smiling. They fell asleep with no unpleasant thoughts in their minds, and their dreams were sweet. These girls grew to womanhood without the thought of fear. They had a mother who knew that to send a child to bed with its mind filled with ill thoughts is a grave mistake. She made child life a study, and knew the importance of treating the little ones according to their nature and make-up.

Entering Jerusalem.

One beautiful Saturday morning, in company with others, I rode out of our camp in Palestine, descended a steep hill to the east, and then turned up a deep valley to the south. The ride in the fresh morning air was delightful. We were not only passing over ground made sacred by Bible events, but we were in a land made charming by the hills, valleys, plains and brooks. We were among the mountains of Ephraim, and were comforted with the thought that this was to be our last day on horseback before reaching the Holy City.

From the deep valley we ascended, passing up higher from first one fertile valley to another, until the top of a lofty range was reached. Here our dragoman stopped, and we drew rein by his side. He then stretched his hand to the south and said, "Take your first look at the City of Jerusalem." Sure enough, there was the City of Jerusalem in the distance. I sat upon my horse and took a long look at the city made famous by Bible characters. Had it not been pointed out I would have recognized it at first sight, though sixteen miles away. The Mount of Olives on the east was plainly visible. Then between the city and the Mount I could also see the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Glancing to the

southeast there was the great Valley of the Jordan spread out, stretching away to the south. The north end of the Dead Sea was in sight, while just below us, and about one mile to the south, was the little village of Bethel, where Jacob once slept and dreamed. Here he saw, in a vision, a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and the angels ascending and descending.

Surely I was on holy ground, and could but look and think. I had traveled thousands of miles, both on the land and on the sea, that I might look upon the city made sacred to me by the lives of holy men and women. At the age of twelve years I had read my first account of the city, and had since read nearly everything treating of the place, on which I could lay my hands. For years I had longed to visit the Holy City, walk her streets and study her surroundings.

And now, for the first time, my eyes beheld what was left of the once most charming city in the eastern world. Was it a vision, or was it a reality! It seemed almost like a vision in the night. It was near here that Jacob had the most comforting vision of his life. It left on his mind a picture that never faded. In the hours of distress he could close his eyes and behold the ladder and the angels. Mine was not a vision. It was a happy reality, and yet it

left a picture that changes not, and is ever present.

Our company rode down into the village of Bethel, and then on to Jerusalem, the city being in sight most of the time. In the afternoon we reached a point just to the north of the Damascus Gate, leaving Calvary a few hundred feet to the east. Here I looked for the first time upon the place where wicked men crucified the Lord of glory. We probably occupied the place where thousands stood that memorable Friday afternoon, and witnessed the greatest tragedy the world has ever known. Darkness fell upon the whole region, sadness filled the hearts of hundreds of earnest disciples, and sorrow reigned in heaven while the multitude stood and looked on in amazement. We rode away from the spot, and on that Saturday evening had the pleasure of entering the City of the Great King. May we all be so fortunate, in the evening of life, as to be permitted to enter the Jeusalem that is above!

The Sunbonnet in Jerusalem.

In company with others it was my privilege to spend Thanksgiving in Jerusalem in 1898. We occupied pleasant quarters on the third floor of an excellent hotel. Many a time have I passed up an easy flight of stairs to the flat roof for the purpose of looking over the city. The hotel stands near the Jaffa Gate, and the top commands a fine view of the greater part of Jerusalem. In a place like this one can profitably spend months reading and studying. The Bible student never seems to grow weary of the sacred associations. But now and then there are occurrences here, as well as elsewhere, outside of the usual, and we now refer to one of them.

A large upper room in the hotel was prepared for the Thanksgiving services. Chairs were brought in from the different rooms and arranged together in church fashion, with an aisle on each side. In front was placed a neatly-covered table and a chair for the minister. Here and there the stars and stripes were displayed, and in a general way the room was made to look somewhat American-like. A number of Americans were stopping at the hotel, there were others in and about the city, and by the time they had gathered in the room we had a real respectable-looking audience.

The services were led by a Methodist minister of fine address, he being assisted by others. The talk was good, the song service inspiring, and the spirit of the gathering somewhat patriotic as well as religious. It was a little remarkable that a purely American Thanksgiving service should thus be held on the northern section of Mt. Zion, near where once stood the marble palace of Herod the Great, and not far from the spot formerly occupied by the gilded palace of King Solomon.

Reflections of this kind, however, were somewhat interrupted by the appearance of a plainly-attired and intelligent looking lady, wearing a real old-fashioned, brown sunbonnet. Her appearance immediately attracted my attention. Her bonnet was not like that worn by most of our sisters of today, but about such a bonnet as might have been seen in a well-regulated church thirty or forty years ago. I had seen no bonnets, save those worn by the sisters in our company, since leaving Sweden. In my own country I might have seen a bonnet of this kind in an audience and not thought much about it. But an old-fashioned split bonnet in Jerusalem aroused my curiosity. I was curious to know something about the lady, and why she was in the Holy City.

Later our company learned more concerning her.

She formerly lived in Ohio, and was then a very proud woman, caring little for the self-denying religion of Jesus. She felt herself called to work among the negroes in the South, and became fully convinced that the fashions of Paris and the religion of Jesus Christ did not blend, so she laid aside her finery, attired herself as she thought becoming a woman professing godliness, and then worked with a clear conscience.

In time she found her way to Jerusalem, and was there working among the poor Jews, trying to convince them that Jesus is their long-expected and long-promised Messiah. Her humble home was among the poorer class. Here she lived, prayed and worked. So far as I could learn, she depended upon no missionary association for support. Her only trust was in the Lord. Now and then some money came her way, and on this she lived, devoting her entire time and strength to the good of those who looked up to her for spiritual help. Those who read this story will by it be reminded of the fact that there lived in Jerusalem at that time at least one woman who looked like an intelligent, devout and earnest American sister of the Brethren church.

Closing the Door Behind Him.

It was the first and only love feast Judas ever attended. He had been with the Master for more than three years. He was the trusted treasurer and steward of the little band of selected believers. He had heard Jesus preach hundreds of times, and such wonderful preaching no man ever heard before. Even the learned and gifted said, " Never man spake like this man." He had seen him perform scores of miracles, to the wonder and amazement of every beholder. He could not, it seems, help believing that his Master, as his disciples called him, was a supernatural being.

At the end of three years the little group of disciples, twelve in number, assembled with their leader in an upper room in Jerusalem. It was probably on Thursday evening, in the early part of April. A memorial meal had been spread upon the table, around which the thirteen had gathered. The curtains were down and the door was closed. The Master, to the amazement of his disciples, girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin, and washed and wiped the feet of each of them. This was a religious service which they could not at that time understand. It was the first love feast for all of them. Then followed the Lord's supper, a meal

that had been prepared for this special evening. It was the last meal that the Son of God ate with his followers while in the flesh.

Near the close of this sacred meal Jesus astonished his disciples by what he said to Judas. Judas understood it, but the others did not. He arose, turned his back upon the Lord's table, walked out of the room, closed the door after him and disappeared. The Christian world knows the fate of that man. His action threw a shadow over the quiet little meeting. Each of the remaining disciples wondered what it meant. Why should Judas leave the room in the midst of the feast? Why should he walk out and close the door after him? That door was closed, nevermore to be opened by the man who had turned his back on the Lord's table. In vain they looked for the door to swing on its hinges, but the man never returned. Satan had entered into him, and he went to his doom.

A few minutes later Jesus blessed the bread representing his broken body, and gave it to his disciples to eat. They ate it with sad forebodings of some mysterious fate awaiting their Master. The cup was passed in like manner. But Judas was not there. He alone of the twelve had been captured by Satan and led to his destruction. During the night he betrayed his holy Master, and before the ending of

another day he closed his unfortunate life at the end of a rope. Such was the fate of the man who dared to turn his back on the Lord's table. Such was the end of the man who left the society of the saints, walked out of the room and closed the door behind him. Such was the doom of the man who permitted Satan to enter his heart and lead him astray. Better for that man had he never been born.

And so it is with those who do not keep their hearts bolted against Satan. If Satan once enters the heart of the believer, as he entered the heart of Judas, his doom is sealed. He will be induced to leave the society of holy people, to leave the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, to turn his back upon the Lord's table and all the sacred institutions belonging to the house of God, to walk out of the church, close the door behind him, and disappear in the sinful world. Sad indeed is the fate of such a man.

The Mistake.

I once made my home in a family for several weeks—where everything, to all appearances, went like clockwork. The family was composed of parents and two sons. They lived on one of the best improved farms in the country. The father was known far and wide as the model farmer of that part of the State. Not one thing was allowed to remain out of order on his premises. Every building and fence was kept in the very best state of repair. He had a place for each tool, and when not in use it had to be there. So far as orderly farming was concerned, he made it a decided success.

He was noted as a strict church member, and it had to be very bad weather indeed if he was not found at his place in church. He was as strict with his boys as with himself. They not only had to attend church and Sunday School as regularly as the Lord's Day came round, but the Sunday had to be spent in each particular as he directed. His word was law, and it was a law that he did not hesitate to enforce whenever occasion demanded it. For miles around no boys seemed so well trained as these two farmer boys. Under their father's ever watchful eye they kept within the bounds of propriety.

Everybody congratulated the intelligent and suc-

cessful farmer for his success in raising an industrious and Christian family. Not a few envied him, and wished they could exert over their children the influence which he seemed to have over his. He was not only pronounced a model farmer, but he was regarded as a wise and most successful parent. In the minds of most of his neighbors he was making family discipline a success in every particular.

The years went rapidly by, and the boys soon reached manhood. When they were twenty-one years old they felt that they were no more under their father. To them it seemed a decided relief. In a little while they were regarded as the wildest boys in the neighborhood. They became positively reckless. This surprised the parents no less than it surprised most people of the neighborhood. To them it became quite apparent that the man who had made a success as a farmer was a failure in his own household. He knew how to compel his boys to obey every word that came from his lips, but he knew not how to develop them. He succeeded in ruling them, but he had not trained them. Under his eyes they knew how to behave themselves, but when once cut loose from his authority they knew no restraint.

Other parents are making the same mistake with their children. They think that enforced, ironclad

rules will settle the whole question. They exact the strictest obedience, never once seeming to realize that cold, formal rules, as compared with intelligent training, are of no lasting value. Had this farmer spent more time in developing his boys, and less with his fine set of rules, the result might have been different. The principles of right doing should have been most thoroughly fixed in the minds of the boys, so that, when they grew to manhood, they would know how to apply them. The boys had been taught how to obey rules, but they had never been taught how to govern themselves.

No one ever saw this stern father engaged in an interesting conversation with his boys. He never consulted them, nor did he try to get them specially interested in his business. It was his privilege, so he thought, to command, and it was the boys' duty to obey. He did the commanding, the boys did the obeying, for they did not dare to do otherwise; but the results in the end were sad to contemplate. Every parent has a right to rule his children—in fact, it is his duty—but what is government without development? It is the father who gets close to the hearts of his children who makes family government a success. He requires obedience, but he thinks more of development and growth along right lines. It is what his children will be when they leave the

parental roof that most concerns him. In the beginning he commences their training with the view of making men and women who will be a credit to their parents as well as a credit to the church and to the community.

When Christmas morning came, the outlook for an earnest minister and his dear ones was anything but encouraging. They were actually in want. Later in the day some of the members, in their Sunday attire, drove up. They were followed by others and by 11 o'clock all the members, save a few of the old and feeble, along with a number of the neighbors, were at the preacher's house. They had baskets, buckets, sacks and other things, and very soon the minister and wife, to the joy and the comfort of their hearts, found themselves in possession of ample supplies for weeks. The callers had even brought their own dinners, and had the minister and family eat dinner with them. After that there was a little meeting and the people went to their homes, not knowing what a dark cloud they had rolled back from their minister's home. To the minister the sky became clear. He could think better than before, work better and his sermon, the next Sunday, was full of life and hope.

The Thorn Removed.

The threshers were at Mrs. Style's on Monday, finishing their work in one day. The lady proudly informed her helpers that her extra grocery bill was several dollars. Her own well-stocked fruit closet could not supply her ambitious demand, and dried apricots, currants, prunes, peaches and raisins were purchased to make up the deficiency. Some one said she had fifteen different kinds and forms of fruit, but that seems a little stretched. However, the fruit, preserves, three kinds of pie, two varieties of cake and the same of cookies, cheese, celery and pickles so completely filled the table that the substantial food, meat, vegetables, etc., had to be served from a side table. What was left, and could not be consumed by the family, had to be thrown away.

The threshing was done on Monday, and all day Sunday the lady and her daughter baked and stewed for the morrow. Laying aside any consideration of the Lord's Day, was it sensible to make such an effort for the mere sake of display? This tired, overworked woman seldom bakes less than three kinds of pie on Saturday, and should Sunday find her with but one kind of pie, and unexpected company, she promptly bakes more for dinner. She is a good, well-meaning woman, but an uncomfortable

hostess, and one who has no time for reading and very little for recreation. She, though a strong woman, has not only worked herself into a nervous condition, but makes her guests nervous. It makes one tired to be around her.

Mrs. Sensible had different ideas about feeding hard-working men. She had the threshers the next Monday. Saturday she baked a goodly batch of cookies and a large loaf cake besides the one for Sunday dinner. She attended services on Sunday morning, rested in the afternoon, and Monday morning found her ready for the fray. When the men went to the city for meat, she sent for bread, cheese, celery and ginger snaps. And with the help of two neighbors she had a dinner fit for a king, without disobeying the laws of nature or nature's God. Not only so, but it was restful to be in her presence. She seemed to take things easy, and yet nothing was neglected.

A wide-awake woman has been watching these things, and has made up her mind that there is no need of a woman making a slave of herself by preparing for company dainty things that serve no good purpose for either the stomach or brain. She says: "Threshers and unexpected guests were at one time my 'thorn in the flesh,' and, in my anxiety, it seemed to me they were, like the poor, 'always

with us.' It occurred to me one day that much of the pleasure of life was being marred by the question which came to my mind at the first glimpse of arriving guests, 'What will I have to eat?' and I settled it then and there, that I would really be glad to see them by not straining myself to furnish a luxurious repast, but by giving them a good, square, welcome meal, and myself some time for visiting. It is a genuine pleasure to entertain intelligent, wide-awake, thinking men and women, if our own ideas be not put absolutely to rout by the duties of hostess." This lady has solved the problem. She enjoys her company, and her company is delighted with her.

The Stolen Goose.

A minister told a member of his congregation that she could not come to church because she had stolen a goose the day before, and had not returned it. The woman in reply said: "Do you suppose that I am going to let a little thing like a goose come between me and my Savior?" One hardly knows whether to frown on account of the woman's spiritual stupidity or to smile because of her innocent wit. True enough, a goose is a little thing to come between a Christian woman and her Savior, and yet, if it is a stolen goose, it becomes large enough to block the way to heaven.

There are people who have no higher conception of Christianity than this misguided woman had. They would not think of permitting a little thing like a pack of cards to stand between them and their Master. They play cards, then go to church and sometimes sing like angels. There are others who will not allow their fine jewelry to come between them and their blessed Jesus, as they say. They wear their costly diamonds and set off their persons with fine ornaments, pretending to think that they are pleasing the Lord.

And, by the way, this thing of men and women going on in their sins, doing this, that, and the

other thing, not in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Gospel, and, at the same time, trying to make it appear that they are worshiping God with all necessary sincerity and loyalty, is becoming a little serious. They say that they are not going to permit a little worldliness to come between them and their Savior, and yet it is there all the same. They may appear religious, may possibly die happy, still the stolen goose has never been returned.

We pity the woman on account of her spiritual stupidity, but are there not thousands equally stupid? They may not have stolen, but they are violating some of the plain New Testament commands, and wholly disregarding others. They need to repent and do their first works over, else they may, at the judgment bar of God, find mountains between them and their offended Master.

Satan and Wealth.

One time a very zealous church worker said to me that he wished he was a rich man. He would like to come into possession of millions of dollars. We have hundreds of people who would be pleased to have a few million dollars come their way, and some of them are doing their utmost to work up to the million-dollar point, but money is not accumulated by wishes. It takes more than mere wishes to produce dollars. But this earnest man said he did not want the money for his own use, for he would like to spend thousands of dollars to help poor churches. Certainly his motives were good, and some are made to wonder why the Lord does not help such men to make money by the million. They think he helps others to accumulate fortunes, and why not help those who want to do good with their wealth?

It is altogether probable that the Lord is not helping very many of the millionaires to pile up their big fortunes. He may be helping some of them, but judging by the methods employed and what they are doing with their money, I cannot avoid concluding that the devil has more to do with many of the great enterprises than anybody else. I further believe that the devil does his utmost to keep

faithful and earnest gospel preachers as poor as possible. It is common for men of wealth to give the Lord credit for the property they have been permitted to accumulate. In many instances it would be far more consistent for them to give the devil credit for their prosperity. A man who employs dishonorable methods to accumulate wealth is a child of Satan and not a child of God, and he should know that Satan, his father, rather than the Lord, is helping him to become rich. It is likely that Satan does not want a million dollars to find their way into the hands of the kind of men referred to in the beginning of this article. They would make too wise a use of their possessions.

A rich man once told me that he was so thankful that the good Lord had blessed him with an abundance of this world's goods. I happened to know something about a few of his business transactions, and I certainly felt like telling him that in my judgment he should thank the devil for considerable of his wealth, for I was quite sure that the Lord could not sanction some of his work. The Lord helped Job as well as Abraham, and under the blessings of heaven they both became very rich, but I feel quite confident that he did not help Herod the Great to acquire his vast fortune. Nor does he help other

rich men who employ dishonorable methods in the accumulation of millions.

The way some people, and even church members, too, at that, employ their wealth, prompts me to conclude that the Lord surely has not given them their earthly possessions. They spend a whole life accumulating property, become immensely wealthy, and then pass out of this world without showing the least appreciation for the help they claim to have received from the Giver of all that is good. It occurs to me that the men and women who give freely for the Lord's work are the ones whom the Lord has been blessing and helping, and it would be easy to name a number of consecrated people who made the wisest possible use of their wealth while living, and left much to be employed for good purposes after being called to their reward. But, candidly, I am not able to understand why the Lord should help a man accumulate a great fortune merely for his own selfish use, and then to turn it over to the world after he is done with it. Possibly the devil has more to do with making rich men than some of us have been led to think.

The Clock Not Started.

On the top of my office desk is a small nickel clock, which is wound every morning. Every Monday morning it is necessary to set the clock as well as wind it, for during Sunday it runs down. One Monday morning I wound the clock and set it as usual, and went on about my work. Some time later I glanced up at the clock and observed the hands were where I had placed them an hour or more before. Then I noticed that the clock was not running. It then occurred to me that while I had wound the clock and set it right, still I had failed to start it. To myself I said, "Just like some church members,—set right, made ready for a long run, but never started."

I got to thinking, and wondered whose fault it is that so many members are standing still. Some used to run well, but they stopped for some cause, and did not get started again. I have known some of them to appear before the church, and apparently be set right before the public as well as before the church, but for some cause they did not run; they could not be induced to keep time with the church and her work. Yes, they did, one time, run well. Some force hindered them, and now, in the spiritual life, there is no activity.

When I saw my clock was not running I took it down, gave it a good shake, set it right again and then it went on doing its duty. I do not mean to say that people who live and do nothing always need a shaking up, but they certainly need something more than a mere letting alone. They need to be started in the Lord's work, and it is one of the puzzling questions, sometimes, to know just how to start them. Jonah, on a certain occasion, had a little experience, down deep in the sea, that started him in the right direction, and he kept going until he reached Nineveh, where the Lord had a special work awaiting him.

People are sometimes converted, as we call it. They come into the church, and, so far as outward appearances are concerned, seem to be just right. But they do not run. By them the name of God is not glorified. They are just the same today that they were when they came into the church a year ago. There has been no progress, and no advancement in the Christian life. Judged by the standard of a babe in Christ Jesus, they may be all right, but they do not grow to manhood in the Lord's cause. They were apparently all right in the beginning, but they never got started. Some of them never got started to giving thanks at the table for their daily bread. They know nothing of the family

altar, and cannot be depended upon to help forward the Lord's work. Surely, they are just like my clock; set all right, wound up, apparently ready for usefulness, but do not run. I verily believe that they need a shaking up.

I have known ministers to be fully prepared for active duty. All the necessary authority was given them; they were wisely instructed and then left to carry forward the Lord's work. But they did not move out, they did not preach. They never got started, and years later they were, so far as usefulness is concerned, just where the installation services left them,—set right, wound up with all necessary authority to preach the Word but not started.

Well, whose fault is it that all these people are not started? Is it their own fault, or is it the fault of some one else? A persecution at Jerusalem one time started a certain number of the brethren out into the world to preaching the Gospel. On a certain occasion the Macedonian call started Paul. But must all preachers be started in this way? Must something of this kind be depended upon to start into work the babes in Christ? Or may not the fault lie at the door of those whose duty it is to look after the flock? Some of us are very much disposed to have all the members accord with the

Gospel in matters relating to the externals, but are we doing just the right thing by not attempting to find work for them? Must we spend all of our time and energies trying to get the church ready for work? Verily, whose fault is it that the clock has not been started?

In an address to a class of young ministers Bishop Fowler recently said, "Laziness is a foe against which the minister must vigilantly stand guard. The preacher should put as much energy into his work as the average business man does into his, if he means to succeed." And the Bishop was right. Spiritual, intellectual indolence and physical indolence are foes to be dreaded in the ministry. A preacher has no more right to expect that God will bless a carelessly-prepared, unstudied, poorly-delivered sermon, than a merchant has to expect a profit from goods that are of wretched material and badly made. Our best is what the Lord wants in the pulpit, and nothing less; and it is only when that standard has been conscientiously reached and maintained that we are entitled to ask that it be made a blessing to others.

Driven from Home.

In the treatment of their children parents sometimes make mistakes that follow them to their graves. They do things that are inhuman, unchristian and sometimes cruel. They do not mean to make mistakes of this sort, but they permit themselves to be influenced by their passions. Judgment, for the time, is dethroned; love feels outraged, and the unwise act is committed.

We have in mind a bright young woman. Her parents were devout and well-to-do members of an influential church. The young woman, after careful study and without any undue persuasion, decided to apply to the Brethren church for membership. Her father told her if she carried out her purpose, she would have to seek another shelter. On a day set for the purpose, and in the presence of a large assembly of sympathetic people, she was buried with Christ in the rite of holy baptism. The scene was both beautiful and impressive, for all the people knew the young lady to be a well-educated, pious and refined woman.

Later in the day she returned to her father's well-furnished and cozy residence only to find her parents ready to execute the unreasonable and unhuman threat they had made. The kind-hearted daughter

was told that the home was hers no more; that she should take her few belongings and seek another roof, never to return until she gave up the religion that she had embraced.

It was a sad day for the young sister. She had no thought of surrendering the faith that she had publicly accepted in the forenoon. Taking what she could bear away, she went from the cozy room that had always been her own, leaving behind all that was near and dear in her parental home, and, in a sense, became a wanderer among those not of her own kindred in the flesh. But she found friends ready to help and cheer her, and soon had work for her hands and head.

Years came and went, but she remained the same earnest, dutiful, intelligent, pious and diligent Christian through all of her experience. There was a place for her in the Sunday School, and she filled it to the full measure. People learned to love her, they wept when they learned of her sad home experiences, but not an unkind word ever escaped her lips regarding her parents. She married, became the mistress of a pleasant home and the mother of happy children.

Time softened the hearts of her parents, and there came a day when they could stand it no longer. They saw their mistake and wept bitterly, but

it was impossible to erase the sad past from their memories. They felt that they had not only made the mistake of their lives, but had actually driven the sunshine from their home. They could repent and ask pardon, and this they did. A letter was written, showing marks of the tears of regret. A more penitent letter could not have been sent to the far-away daughter, whose cup of joy was thereby made full to overflowing.

Now the daughter is once more looked upon as a loving member of the family, and, should she be permitted to again return to the scenes of her childhood, will be shown the room from which she was barred when only a babe in Christ. The breach is closed, never more to be opened, but the painful past will cling to the memory of these parents until their dying day. They have been forgiven both on earth and in heaven, but there is nothing that can wipe the sad experience of ten years from memory's tablet.

In all this there is a moral for every parent. They may, at times, feel that a child is walking contrary to their wishes, but let them ever bear in mind that the driving of a son or daughter from under the roof of its parents is a fearful undertaking in the eyes of both God and man.

The Bible Our Neighbors Read.

The daily lives of the church members are about the only Bible some people ever read. Instead of reading the Acts of the Apostles, they read the "Acts of the Church Members." They may not know much about the Gospel according to St. Matthew, but they can sit for hours and tell what they know about the "Gospel according to Deacon Jones." They may never have heard of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, but they can quote by the hour from the living epistles too well known in their immediate neighborhood. The New Testament Book of Revelation is a mystery to them, but not so with the revelations about the different church members they meet almost daily.

You quote Scriptures to these people and they will quote ten times as much from some of the "living epistles" in their own neighborhood. What care they for the Gospel according to St. Mark when the Gospel according to Deacon Smith contradicts it at every point? You may refer them to the Acts of the Apostles to show them how people were converted. They simply refer you to the acts of the church members, to show to you how many of the present converts now live. Talk to them about the Bible. They cannot understand it,

but they can understand the conduct of a half-dozen church members when they do not live up to their profession. And when the minister quotes from the Book of Revelation, concerning the end of the world and the destiny of the wicked, they cannot help thinking about the revelations that have just come to them regarding the conduct of this, that and the other church member. Let the minister preach a sermon on the purity of the heart, or a heart work, and probably one-third of his hearers will begin thinking about some hearts whose purity they gravely doubt. Tell the people about the importance of plainness in attire. Quote them Scripture on the subject and they will begin quoting from the "Acts of the Church Members" on the same question. The quotations will not harmonize, and in the minds of not a few a quotation from the latter will go farther than one from the former. And so on to the end of the list.

Well, what is to be done? There is no denying the quotation from the "Gospel according to Deacon Jones," or from the epistle, known and read of all men. The facts are there. There is no chance for a revision. These late walking gospels and living epistles stand in the way of the people. They point one way, and the New Testament points another. Here is a problem, and about the only way to

solve it is to bring about some new and radical conversions. Jesus told Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." That is the doctrine we need to teach to every man and woman who does not live and walk orderly before the Lord. If sinners will pay more attention to the lives of the members than to the New Testament itself, and we know they do, then we must give them a better class of members to read. They must have better living epistles, and acts of members that will not mislead them. We need members who can sincerely say, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Of course we do not want members to talk just that way, but they ought to be such that even a sinner could point to one of them and say, "Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." We should have men and women who are going on to perfection,—people who can be examples to others.

With people of this class we can accomplish the more good, for the sinner could then go on reading the Gospel according to Bro. Jones and Sister Smith, and be benefited. After reading the New Testament a heathen at one time said, "The Book is all right," and then added, "The Book is better than the Christian." The trouble lies in the fact that we live too far below the Book, and that weak-

ens our influence. Not long since we conversed with a physician on religious subjects. He remarked, "If the Christian people would live up to their profession they would soon have all such fellows as myself in the church, and it would not take a revival to bring us." While this condition will not exonerate the doctor at the judgment, it does show how much the cause of Christ is crippled by those who do not walk blameless before God and man.

At the wedding in Cana of Galilee the best wine came last. This was because Jesus made it. But with Jesus it was the best all the while. He never preached a poor sermon. He made no mistake in any of the miracles he performed. One was just as well done as the other. When he made bread and fish for the five thousand the people had not a word of complaint about the food he furnished them. They never ate better bread and probably never tasted better fish. Then, too, his life was the highest type. His conversation was not only holy, but it was highly instructive. As a teacher there was no one his equal in all the world. And so it was with the religion he taught. It was the best then, and is the best yet.

The Sunday Dinner.

Once upon a time, after preaching to a most attentive congregation, the preacher's wife said I should go to their home for dinner. The drive was a pleasant one, just as most country drives are in midsummer. The sister was not long about preparing the meal, nor did she seem tired and worn out when the guests were shown their seats in the dining-room. After thanks, I glanced over the table, and noticed that, while there was plenty on the table, there were but two warm dishes to be seen. All the other dishes were cold. The food was well prepared, and everything, table linen and all, seemed neat and tidy.

The wife took her seat at the table and enjoyed the meal with her guests. There was no passing from the table to the kitchen to bring more to eat. There was no serving of special dishes at the close. There was no urging of the visitors to eat several kinds of cake, a few pieces of pie and a dish or two of rich dessert after we thought we had eaten a fair meal. It was all on the table, one plain cake and the other dishes referred to. We ate and talked. So did the husband, wife and guests. It was simply a good, plain, substantial Sunday dinner,—a dinner that had not cost much, did not

take long to prepare and one that answered its purpose in every particular.

I enjoyed the meal, the conversation and the simplicity of the occasion. After it was all over I felt that I had not been the cause of a preacher's wife desecrating the Lord's Day by overtaxing her strength to get a big dinner for the visiting preacher and the other company. Then I fell to wondering why other women cannot get into the habit of preparing sensible, wholesome and economical Sunday dinners. I wondered why it cannot be arranged for the women to have some rest on the Lord's Day, even if they do happen to have company. Here were only two freshly-cooked dishes, and one of them I did not need to touch, for there was plenty on the table besides, to satisfy a hungry man. There were also a few cold dishes and they were palatable. Lemonade took the place of tea and coffee, and, as a rule, makes a more wholesome drink.

I thought, Why should the woman make a Sunday slave of herself in order to get her visitors a much larger meal than they really need? Why must she work an hour or two over the hot stove, then remain on her feet, waiting on the table, while her friends are eating; when they retire, sit down alone, warm and tired, eat a hasty dinner, and then use up the rest of her strength cleaning up the

dishes and table, and make herself so tired that she will not be in a condition to enjoy her company?

I asked again, Is this the right way to spend the Lord's Day? Is this the way to treat the hard-working wives or servants either? Do the people of God, who have much to say about Gospel simplicity, want to encourage this way of living? Do they want their influence to be cast on that side of the Sunday question? If we believe in the simple and sensible life, why not practice it on Sunday as well as other days? Why should sensible Christian women attempt to excel each other with big Sunday dinners? Then, to think of it, some of them stay at home from church just to cook an elaborate dinner for company!

The better way is the simple meal that requires but little work. Two or three warm dishes ought to be enough. A few cold dishes, prepared the day before, will help. Let no one say the table was made to groan beneath its burden of rich food. Offer the guests plain nourishment, serve it in a simple way, give the good wife a chance to rest and enjoy the meal as well as her company, and in the end God will be glorified and people will not so often be called on to make a god of their appetite. We insist on simplicity in our lives, in our attire and our everyday life. Now let us be

consistent enough to practice at our Sunday dinners what we preach.

Brother Jones is a real earnest Christian man, but now and then becomes a little eccentric. People will laugh a little at some of his odd ways, but not at his charity. One day he throws a sack of potatoes in his spring wagon, a ham, and a bushel of the best apples in the orchard. He asks his wife to go with him, and they drive down the lane, getting a sack of flour and some groceries as they go by the store at the crossroads. A half hour later they stop at a little house by the side of the road. Here lives a poor but earnest sister. She is left alone in the world. She toils hard to keep the wolf from the door, and just at this time has neither money nor food. Bro. Jones finds a place in the cellar for the potatoes and apples, and the other things are carried into the small pantry by the side of the kitchen. Two happy people drive back to their farm home, while a pale little woman goes into her closet to pray and shed tears of joy.

The Mother and the Daughter.

It was my first visit to the brick meetinghouse. I enjoyed the sermon very much, and made a few remarks myself. I was much pleased with the hearty greeting I received after meeting. When one is from home, it does his soul good to find kindred spirits. I accepted an invitation to dine with one of these good old deacons. His wife seemed the perfection of kindness. She introduced me to their daughter, a real intelligent young lady. I was pleased to find such an entertaining daughter in a brother's family. As we drove down the pike, she seemed perfectly delighted with some good steps taken by the District Meeting, just then over.

The carriage had hardly stopped in front the commodious house, till she was out, and passed up the graveled walk on a run. By the time I reached the house with her mother, she had the fire in the base-burner in a perfect glow, for it was yet cool, and was ready to take my overcoat and hat, and helped me to the best rocking-chair in the house. For one solid hour she entertained me in a real, brilliant way. She understood music, history, had a good stock of general information, and knew almost as much about the Brotherhood and our leading writers and preachers as I did. Her father

seldom said anything, though he seemed interested. All the while I could hear the quick steps of the mother in the kitchen. I must confess that I did not altogether enjoy the conversation, for somehow I thought that the young lady ought to be out in the kitchen, helping her mother.

When we walked out into the dining-room and I saw that good old mother wiping the perspiration from her face and neck with that long blue apron, I could not help pitying her. The table was literally piled full of good things. While eating it occurred to me that it would have looked a great deal better if the young woman could have prepared the meal, and let the good old mother have a little rest. Possibly the meal might not have been as well gotten up, and then, possibly, the mother could not have entertained me so well. However, let that be as it may, one thing is certain, if I had been a young man, looking for a wife, I believe I would never have stopped at that place. Somehow, I have very little confidence in daughters who will not help their mothers, and will not do what they can to make their burdens lighter.

The Child's Commentary.

In nine cases out of ten the father and mother are the commentaries by which their small children interpret the Holy Scripture. They soon learn that their parents belong to the church, and are not long in falling in with their ways of thinking. They at once favor the church where father and mother worship, and, as they advance in years, imbibe, to a certain extent, the doctrine held by them.

By and by the children begin to study their parents. They will commence studying their parents before they read the Bible. They know that they belong to church, that they hold to certain doctrines, believing that a certain thing is right, and, on the other hand, that another thing is wrong. The time was when the children thought what their father and mother believed was all right, but as they grow still older and their minds become more mature, they look at things differently. They wonder whether this, that, and the other thing, are really right! It does not look just that way to them. They wonder whether it is in keeping with the teachings of the New Testament, and on learning that it is not, it is a question in their minds whether to denounce the book or to doubt the sincerity of their parents.

For years—while younger—they had been interpreting the Bible by their parents. To them their mother had been a walking commentary. Their father had served as a guide post, pointing in the direction leading to heaven and happiness. But now they are reading father and mother closer. They see in their conduct something they never specially noticed before. They hear them use bywords and sometimes other words not becoming a devout Christian. Then they talk unkindly about their neighbors. They frequently abuse, or rather talk abusively of some of the members in the church. They may even say some hard things about the preachers, and also about the elder, whose dealings are not at all times above question. They notice that their parents lack in religious zeal, as well as in devotion to the church and her work. At meeting they sometimes hear father or mother pray, but at home never. At church they often see them singing like angels, but at home hear them scold and say many unkind things.

The commentary that first delighted and encouraged them has now proved a puzzle. Must they lose faith in their parents, or must they lose faith in the Bible? If they lose faith in their parents, then the early living commentary is gone. It can no more be a help to them in religion. If they sur-

render the Bible, then they look upon their parents as having been deceived, and religion can have no consideration upon their part. They have become skeptical, and are hopelessly lost. All this is due to the unfaithful lives of their parents.

How much better it would be for their children could parents only set before them the true light! Blessed is the child whose father or mother is a true and reliable commentary on the New Testament. They early learn to read their parents. They learn this long before they can read anything in the Bible. Now, if, in after-years, they find the manner of life of their parents in perfect harmony with the teachings of the Sacred Volume, then they will have confidence, not only in those who brought them into the world, but also in the Book. Parents need only study this subject in order to understand its bearing on the rising generation. They can see how their conduct may lead to the salvation of their children or may be the means of driving them farther away from the kingdom. May God help all the parents truly to become living epistles—living commentaries—for the guidance and comfort of their children.

The Mind: Its Care.

Did you ever walk through a fine apple orchard and admire the fruitful trees? Have you not seen these trees covered with bloom and, later on, hanging full of fruit? Then, have you not visited the orchard again, and been charmed by the tinted leaves and large, delicious apples? Have you not stood beneath the outspreading branches of some favorite tree and counted the large, ripe apples lying on the ground? Did you not, at the same time, notice some decayed fruit? Did you take the pains to count such apples? More especially, did you eat any of the decayed fruit? Certainly not. That was sensible. That is the way all fair-minded people do. They admire the beautiful, and eat that which is good. They never would think of eating a rotten apple. They might possibly gather them up and cast them into the ditch, but they could never be induced to make use of them, or even to ask anybody else to do so.

That is the right way to treat the body. The Lord never intended that people should put partly decayed fruit into their stomachs. Why not be thus wise regarding the care of the mind? The world is full of good things to think about. There are good books and papers everywhere. In nature

there is much to admire and think about. Then, why feast upon the evil and the unpleasant? Why spend hours and even days, rolling evil thoughts over and over in the mind, as though they were sweet morsels? True, evil things are about us. We cannot help noticing them. But why not dispose of them, as we would get rid of decayed fruit, and then go on thinking about the good, the noble, the beautiful and the uplifting?

Decayed fruit in the stomach will soon ruin it. Next will come disease, followed by a painful death. The same unwise treatment may lead to a troubled mind and an unhappy life. The wise man takes care of his body. He knows that it is the only one he is ever going to get in this world. But he is not always so careful regarding the care of his mind. He fills his mind with unpleasant thoughts, and then wonders why he must all the time be worried with the evil of this world. He is like the foolish man—if one so foolish could be found—who whiles away his time in his charming orchard, feasting on decayed fruit.

In this wicked world we cannot avoid coming in contact with evil. Sin and misfortune must be encountered, but they should be disposed of. At least we should not permit the mind to feast upon such thoughts. To do so will not be good for the mind,

neither will it produce happiness. It requires time, attention and great care to supply the stomach with healthful food. This is true of the needs of the mind. He who would have a healthful, useful, happy, pure and contented mind must give it even more attention than he gives his stomach or his body. A pure mind might possibly exist in a neglected body, but a spotless soul will not go hand in hand with a willfully neglected mind.

To Peter Jesus once said, "Feed my lambs." By this he meant that Peter should take good care of the young members of the flock. And what was said to Peter is meant for every minister in the list of the faithful. Jesus is especially concerned about the young members of the church. He wishes them well fed upon the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow and become strong. Should any of them be led astray, they are to be looked after and led back to the flock. All of this should be done carefully and tenderly. In the work of caring for the young the elders and ministers are to take the lead. That is, they should make it their life duty to look after the young. They need fatherly counsel and motherly tenderness.

Giving Up the Semicolon.

Henry Clay Trumbull, for years editor of the Sunday School Times, while always kind, fairly pliable and reasonable in the end, had notions of his own, and sometimes he clung to them with considerable tenacity, even when confronted by others in whose judgment he had much confidence. He was much given to the use of the semicolon, in his writings, and sometimes used it where the comma more properly belonged. One day his proofreader called his attention to the wrong use of the semicolon, telling him that the comma should be employed instead. He chose to differ with her, though she was an expert at the business and had been reading proof for him for years. The matter happened to come up again and the managing editor took sides with the proofreader. Mr. Trumbull stood by his semicolon, arguing the case with both of them. Becoming a little agitated he put on his hat and started out, but before closing the door behind him, said, in his emphatic way, that he would give up editorial work on the paper before he would give up that semicolon. After walking around awhile, he returned, looking perfectly reconciled, and said to his proofreader and managing editor that he had decided to give up the semicolon.

But the semicolon people are not all dead yet, nor are they disposed to give up their semicolon. They get pet notions and hang to them as though their very life and prosperity depended upon some particular way of doing or looking at things. It is well for Christian men and women to cling to principles with all reasonable firmness, but when it comes to methods, in which the judgment of others may be of value, it will be found exceedingly unwise to persist in having our own way, regardless of results. Many a man has sacrificed much for a pet notion that was of no special value. This has been the case in matters pertaining to domestic and business matters as well as in religious matters. Men have been known to give up the church rather than surrender some pet notion of little consequence. Families have been divided and broken up because of a few pet notions. Some of these pet notions have severed the strong ties of friendship, and it is to be feared that some of them have kept people out of heaven. It will often be found wise to do like Mr. Trumbull,—decide to give up the semicolon.

Clean Hands.

The law of Moses directed that those committing adultery should be stoned to death. One time a woman was caught in the act of committing this sin. By some of the scribes and Pharisees she was brought before the Savior and her sin reported. They knew what the law required, but they wanted to see what Jesus would do with the woman. This they did to tempt him.

He gave them plenty of time to think and then said: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8: 7). In other words, You can do as Moses directed, but the first stone must be cast by a man who has clean hands. Each man was left to settle the question for himself, and not one of the accusers would admit that his hands were clean enough to cast the first stone.

Among the Hindus there is a fable illustrating this lesson. A thief "was captured with stolen money in his hand and sentenced to die. The night before his execution he devised this novel plan for rescue: He called the jailer into his cell and said, 'Go tell the king that if I can come to him, I can tell him how to grow gold.' The news was carried to the king and he said, 'Let the culprit be brought before me.' When the thief entered the royal pres-

ence he produced a piece of gold and said, 'Your majesty, if this piece of gold be planted in the soil it will grow into a tree, every branch of which will be laden with gold as an orchard with fruit. But this golden seed must be planted by a hand which has never been stained by a dishonest act. Of course, I am a thief and cannot plant this seed. My hand is not clean, so I pass it to your majesty.' The king looked at the gold for a moment, then he said, 'I would plant it if I could, but alas! my hand is not clean; I will pass it to my prime minister.' The prime minister's hand was not clean, so he passed it to the governor of the citadel. The governor's hand was not clean, and he passed it to the high priest. The high priest's hand was not clean, and he passed it on to another. Thus the golden seed went from hand to hand. Then the thief said, 'Your majesty, if no man's hand is clean, why should I alone die for the crime?' 'You are right,' said the king. 'If you are to die then I must die also.'"

All around us are people who make it their business to pass judgment on those who make mistakes, while they themselves have unclean hands. We sometimes see this in council meetings. Members, with hands not wholly clean, persist in having others set right. They plead for a pure church and an up-

right membership, while their own hands are stained. It is proper to have those who sin to repent and be set right before the church and the community, but how becoming it would seem if those who lead out in a move of this sort would first wash their own hands! And until they can do this, let them not cast the first stone, nor be too forward about planting the golden seed that produces the golden fruit. Even the sinner admires clean hands, and God demands them. Only clean hands will be permitted to receive the clear title to mansions in the skies.

Grandfather.

Grandfather had seen better days. I mean the one to whom we refer at this time. He was once a strong young man, full of life and with bright prospects before him. He took to himself the maid whose heart and hand he had won. They were poor, but they were happy. They had few troubles and dreamed of none. Life with them was full of sunshine and the outlook hopeful. They looked forward to the time when they could possess a comfortable home and have about them plenty on which to live, and also a place where they could spend the declining years of life.

Their first house was small, consisting of but one room. And yet it was large enough for the young father, mother, and two little girls. As the years went by other rooms were added, and then there were more children. Trees were planted, and in time the buildings, the orchard and shade trees gave the little knoll, by the side of the country road, a most charming appearance. The fond parents did not neglect their religion while accumulating wealth, but they did, in a measure, neglect the best interests of their children. One by one their sons and daughters were sent off to school. They did not select schools particularly favored with

religious environments. The children were well educated, and thus fitted for society and business, but not for the Lord's house. The soul culture had been neglected, and not one of them was a member of the church. Considerable property passed into their hands, and, so far as the world was concerned, they were in excellent circumstances.

There came a change. The father and mother grew old. Their eyes grew dim and their strength failed them. The home farm was turned over to a son-in-law, and the parents were to be contented with a home with their daughter. The daughter, of course, was kind, and so were all the grandchildren. But the home was not as in days of yore. It ceased to be a lodging place for the Brethren who chanced to visit the locality. There was a time when this good man and wife could count on entertaining all the ministers who visited their church. Their roof had sheltered some of the most gifted preachers in the Fraternity. But that had come to an end. The daughter and her family moved in fashionable society, and by this the aged father and mother were in a measure cut off from the society of the church. They often wept. They had hoped that their last years might be their most enjoyable ones. But such was not the case. They saw their mistake. They had raised their children for the

world, and not for the church. It was too late to make amends. They could only weep and wait for the boatman to come and row them across the chilly waters to the other shore.

By and by a minister was sent for. The neighbors gathered. There was to be a funeral. The boatman had come for grandmother. It seemed that loving hands could not do enough for the dead mother. No expense was spared. The coffin was fine. The hearse was the best to be had. The casket was covered with costly flowers. Grandmother never had so much respect shown her. The minister grew eloquent, the sons and daughters wept. The grandchildren cried, and even the neighbors shed tears. All this was for the dead. The poor woman was cold in death, and could not realize what was being done for her. The aged husband wept and sobbed. He said nothing, but he thought, "If only half this affection had been bestowed upon mother while living, how pleasant life would have been to her!" To the angels it probably looked like mockery.

Grandfather was left alone. Scores reached for his hand and said words that were meant to be consoling. He leaned on the arm of a daughter as he looked down into the cold grave; then was gently led away. For a few days each one of the family acted as an

angel of love. No grandfather was ever treated more kindly. Time, however, moved them all farther away from the sad incident, and inside of a few months the scenes at the funeral and grave seemed to have been forgotten. The gray-headed father sank into despondency. No one appeared to take any special interest in him. Not only so, but he seemed to be in the way. His room was wanted for another purpose. The family desired to entertain more, but grandfather was in the way. No wonder the good old man was sad! His last days were full of sorrow. He lived only because he had to. He hoped for relief when he reached the other shore, and anxiously he wondered when the boatman would come for him!

Ideal Parents.

We are told of a devout minister who seldom preaches from the pulpit, though called to the ministry many years ago. He raised a large family, and all of his children, though grown, have the utmost confidence in him. They know their father to be an honest, truthful, consistent and pious man. In their meditations they would never dream of calling in question the moral or Christian conduct of their father, for he has lived such a frank and open life before his children that they know him most thoroughly. All through life he has taken his children into his confidence and all parties came to have perfect confidence in each other.

While the man has never been able to impress the people with the thought that he possessed the ability to preach, still he has, under all circumstances, whether at home or abroad, whether in the country or in the city, whether managing his forces on the farm or dealing with the merchants, behaved himself like a pure-minded, consecrated minister of the Gospel. There are scores among his best friends who question his ability to fill the pulpit in a creditable manner, but all concede the fact that the man's life measures up to the very highest standard of the most eloquent, influential and learned in the

pulpits of the country. There are thousands who can easily excel him in the pulpit, but there are few, if any, who can excel him in living the Christ-life.

As an ideal man for the pulpit he would receive few votes, even in his own congregation, where he is so well known and highly respected, but as a model Christian man he would receive the endorsement of all the people in his community, even those of other persuasions. He lacks in ability as a public expounder of the great truths of the Bible, but in faithfulness he fills the gospel measure to perfection. The man is no scholar; he is not even a gifted thinker, and yet his manner of life is as beautiful and as entertaining as a poem.

His wife is also an aged saint, with moral, religious and motherly attainments second to none. She is held in high esteem alike by her children and neighbors. These two aged people have lived together as husband and wife more than sixty years. They have had their trials and reverses, but it is said,—and no one who knows them doubts the statement,—that during their married life neither one has ever spoken an unkind or hasty word to the other. They have plenty of temper. They are from families noted for the fire and vim in their make-up, yet the love, respect and very high regard they have

for one another have enabled them to keep their tempers completely in hand. In this they have acted wisely, not alone for their own good, but for the good of their children.

Not many children, if asked to do so, could truthfully affirm that they never heard either of their parents utter an unkind or hasty word to the other. Thrice blessed are the sons and daughters who, all through life, can feel that their parents lived a life so worthy of commendation. They may not be able to refer to them on account of special attainments in scholarship, wealth or popularity, but they can always feel honored for the reason that they made the Christian life an eminent success.

No more helpful heritage can be passed down to children than the nobility acquired by living on a high moral and religious plane. Children may waste the money or even tarnish the good name that falls to them, but they can never get away from the uplifting and purifying influences of devout parents who live the ideal life. They may forget the comrades of early life; they may even forget the scenes of childhood, but time can never remove from their souls the clearly-defined impressions made by the godly father and the angelic mother.

The Beggar.

In Luke 16 a very touching story is told of an unfortunate man who breathed his last while near the gate of a rich man. His name was Lazarus, and his last days were spent as a beggar. The story is very short, in fact too short to contain the history of the man. But he had a history nevertheless.

There may have been a period in his life when he was in good circumstances. He may have had a loving mother and a kind father. His boyhood may have been passed most pleasantly. At any rate he grew to manhood, and entered upon the task of making his own way through the world. Morally and religiously he was doubtless an exemplary young man, and the outlook in the world was as good for him as for the average person in his circumstances.

There may have come a time in his life when each evening, after the labors of the day were completed, he could return to his own vine-clad cottage on the hillside, and enjoy the society of an affectionate wife and the comforts and joys of a charming home. How many years were spent in this manner we have no way of knowing, but we can well imagine that such may have been, for a while at least, his good fortune.

But there came an unwelcomed change. The loving wife was torn from his heart and embrace, and assigned a resting place in the tomb. Then, in course of years, the delightful home slipped away from him. Just how this happened we can only imagine. Sickness in the family may have caused debts that increased as the years went by. The death of the angel of his household left him discouraged, and he went out into the world despondent and with a broken heart. To him life lost all its charms. The loss of his home brought additional hardships, and then followed sickness.

The loss of his health was the matter of only a few years. With wife, money and health all gone, friends were few. There may have been a time in life when he could have numbered his friends by the score. But our story finds him without friends as well as without health, and without money. Matters went from bad to worse, and he became a most unfortunate beggar. He could no more walk the streets in quest of alms. All he could do was to lie, day after day, at the gate of a rich man, begging for only the crumbs that came from those who had plenty. Terrible was the condition of his flesh, for he seemed to have been greatly infested with sores, and it was a comfort to have the dogs of the street lick them.

Most people who knew him probably thought of

his condition when he lived happily in the little cottage on the hillside. "What a change," they would say. "How the man has fallen!" Yes, it may have looked that way to man, but God did not see it in that light. God was not looking at the diseased body; he was all the while looking at the soul. But the end came at last. The poor beggar closed his eyes in death, with only the dogs to watch by his side. He passed away without one loving hand to aid him in his deep distress. How he may have longed for the presence of a dear wife or a loving mother! But no one came to comfort him. His only relief was death.

At public expense his body was taken to the potter's field, and there buried. Many who happened to know him probably felt that death came none too soon, and in all likelihood thought it was fortunate that he died. He was soon forgotten, for the people regarded him only as an unfortunate beggar.

They never knew, of course, that angels stood by him when his heart ceased to beat, and then bore his spirit to paradise. They never knew that during all his misfortunes his soul remained true to God, and that by him it was claimed for the land of the blest. But so it was with Lazarus. He made life a success. While the rich around him made life a

failure, the poor, unfortunate beggar made it a crowning success. The moral of this story teaches that we should never look down on a man simply because he is poor and unfortunate. In the diseased and scantily-clad body may be hidden one of the noblest souls. It is altogether probable that not a few of the finest ornaments to be found in the New Jerusalem will be from bodies scorned and despised of men. God looks upon the heart.

Flowers for the Living.

I once stood by a costly casket. It contained all that was mortal of a faithful wife. Like other girls she came into the world and grew to womanhood. Her environments were pleasant, and she knew much of the real enjoyments pertaining to the springtime of life. She was not only a lover of the beautiful, but among the young she was regarded as the most charming of women. But few sorrows crossed her path. She knew the world only to love it.

But there came a day when she stood by the side of a young man, who had won her heart, and listened to the man of God, who in solemn tones pronounced them one. Years came and went. A few children called her mother, and for them she gave her life as well as her charms. In time the well-known marks of care sat heavily upon her face. One seeing her near the autumn of life would never have imagined that she was at one time considered more lovely than the rose of Sharon. Her beauty had faded, and the earnest look of a busy life marked every lineament of the face that could have served the most gifted artist as a model.

Her love for flowers never left her, and so she filled her windows and a part of her yard with them.

Her children and her neighbors also admired her flowers. The husband was a busy man. He loved his wife in a matter-of-fact way. They commenced their struggles with the busy world very early in life, and had long since taken not a few things, relating to love and affection, for granted. When I stood by the casket it was almost covered with the most lovely of flowers. They were procured in a large city, and cost twenty or more dollars. The good woman had closed her eyes in death a few days before, but in all her life she had probably never seen flowers so lovely as those placed upon her casket in the presence of the admiring hundreds. I thought the people that day paid more attention to the flowers than to the sermon or the prayers. To them the flowers seemed a wonderful token of great affection.

Well, I fell to thinking, and wondered why people wait until their loved ones are dead before they think of flowers. How much better it would have been, for this hard-working wife, if some of that money had been spent for flowers while she was living! Perhaps the husband had never thought of purchasing a rose or carnation for his most devoted companion. He could not see what good it would do, and then, of course, he did not have the money to spare. But as soon as she was dead, and could

no more appreciate a token of love, he had plenty of money to give, in order to make a display before the world.

It is said that one flower in the sick room is worth a whole bouquet at a funeral. Why do not people think of this, and give their flowers when they can be appreciated! A rose, costing only a nickel, will do the sick wife a thousand times more good than a wreath costing five dollars will do on the closed coffin. If a husband has money to spend for the finest flowers that grow, why not purchase some for the loved one while she can enjoy them!

For my part, I would like to see a change. I prefer to see the flowers sent to the sick room, but omitted at the funeral. If any of your friends are sick, send them a flower. If one is sent every day or two it will be only the better. At the funeral your flowers will do no good. In heaven you will not receive a blessing for them, but for every flower you place in the sick room, or in the hands of a loved one, you shall not fail to receive a reward. God did not make the flowers for the dead, he made them for the living. Then let the living have them when they will do their hearts good.

The Brave Mother.

It was the middle of the afternoon of a busy day that I closed my desk, passed down to the street and one-half hour later found myself approaching a home, where crepe hung from the front door. Men and women, young and old, were filling the rooms. I was given a seat in the room occupied by the mourners, though I was not of the kindred. The white casket, almost covered with flowers of the season, was in one corner of the same room.

The casket contained all that was mortal of a boy who was sleeping his last sleep. I could see his well-formed face from where I was sitting, for his head seemed to be resting upon a small pillow, placed there by loving hands. The ministers took their places and all was quiet, seemingly as still as death. We were with the dead.

I was to be a quiet listener and observer, and so was left to meditate. I fell to thinking, and called to mind some of the scores of instances where I had spoken words of comfort to the bereft, and gave words of warning to others in the presence of the departed. Then I remembered that I had stood by the dead on both continents, that I had stood by the tombs of some of the most distinguished dead the world had ever known, that I had been in the death

chambers of the rich and poor, of saints and sinners, of the devout and vicious.

I fell to meditating, and even meditated as the officiating minister read and prayed. I listened and meditated too, for there are times when one may do both. I said to myself: This lad is not dead. He does not look like one who is dead. He is just sleeping. The machinery of the body has stopped, the fires have gone out, there is nothing to warm the life-giving blood. What if Jesus would enter the room, rekindle the fires, warm up the blood, touch the secret spring of life and again put the machine in motion! There would be joy in the family, faith in hundreds of souls would be revived, and all the city would come to the humble home to look upon the lad enjoying his second lease on life. But it was really the resurrection scene that was passing before my mind. A little later and this will come to pass. The lad may rest a while, a number of sad days may come to the parents, but the Master will, by and by, appear upon the scene of action, press the unseen button, and the boy will awaken from his long, sweet sleep.

The minister had said his last word, the last song was sung and the people had passed the casket, taking their last look at the sleeping lad. There was a lull for a moment, then a few kindred stood by the

casket. Then occurred what I had never seen before. The mother moved to the side of her boy, adjusted the pillow to suit her idea of comfort, placed a small bunch of flowers by the partly turned face, so the eyes might fall upon them should they open, and arranged parts of the garment, requiring only the touch of a mother. Then she gathered up what looked to me like a soft, thin blanket, covered the boy gently, tucking the blanket in here and there, just as a mother is often seen to do when preparing her child for the night. The movements of her hands and eyes indicated that it was all natural rather than premeditated. Not another hand or foot in the rooms moved while this was going on. It was the work of but a minute, but it seemed like many. She paused an instant, taking a good look at the covered form, as though she thought her child was now prepared for his long night's sleep, then raising her veil, kissed his brow good-night and resumed her seat with perfect composure.

There were, at this moment, probably no dry eyes in seeing distance. Strong men wept like children, though not a word had been said. But to myself I said: "Brave mother." Then again I thought, Why not? It was the mother's boy. Hundreds of times she had tucked the covers around him in bed, planted the good-night kiss and wished him pleasant

dreams, only to greet her bright, loving boy in the morning. And now, in this his last sleep, why should not the kind mother give to his preparation the finishing touch?

The casket was closed and an hour later the mother saw her boy placed in what is to be called the lad's bedchamber until the angel from on high calls out the resurrection morning. It is seemingly an instance in which the boy goes to his final rest a short time before the parents retire. But when the evenings now come to the brave little mother she will never need to say to herself—as thousands of sad mothers have said—"Oh, where is my boy tonight?" The mother knows that her boy is quietly tucked away in his little white bed, just where she left him when she gave him the last good-night kiss.

Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not "Good night," but in some brighter clime
Bid me "Good morning."—Mrs. Barbauld.